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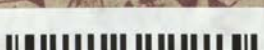

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Falstaff's Letters

BY

JAMES WHITE

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1796 AND NOW
REPRINTED VERBATIM ET LITERATIM

WITH NOTICES OF THE AUTHOR
COLLECTED FROM
CHARLES LAMB LEIGH HUNT
AND OTHER CONTEMPORARIES

LONDON
B. ROBSON 43 CRANBOURN STREET
LEICESTER SQUARE
1877

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TO THE DEAR AND DELIGHTFUL MEMORY

OF

CHARLES LAMB

THIS NEW EDITION OF A BOOK

WHICH HE LOVED TO PRAISE

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

MONOGRAPH ON

JAMES WHITE,

AUTHOR OF THE FALSTAFF LETTERS.

IT would seem to be the fate of some books to be born into the world out of their due time, and thus to miss the meed of praise and fame to which their merit entitles them, and which under more fortunate auspices they would doubtless have obtained. One such modest little book, after suffering eighty years of undeserved and otherwise unaccountable neglect, it is now our pleasure and our privilege to introduce to the reader's acquaintance.

No attentive student of the exquisite and delightful Letters of Charles Lamb can have failed to notice more than one allusion, in which he praises with no grudging or sparing hand, and with equal discrimination and enthusiasm, the work of his early

friend and school-fellow, the tardy rep
duction of which is, we would fain flat
ourselves, no unwise or unacceptable trib
to the memory of Elia.

Speaking of the period immediately p
ceding the terrible domestic tragedy wh
cast its shadow over the rest of Lam
life, Talfourd writes :—

"During these years Lamb's most f
quent companion was James White,
rather Jem White, as he always called hi
Lamb always insisted that for hearty joyo
humour, tinged with Shakespearian fanc
Jem never had an equal. "Jem White
said he to Mr. Le Grice, when they met f
the last time, after many years' absence,
the Bell at Edmonton, in June, 1833, "the
never was his like! We never shall se
such days as those in which Jem flourished
All that now remains of Jem is the cel
bration of the suppers which he gave th
young chimney-sweepers in the *Elia* of hi
friend, and a thin duodecimo volume whic
he published in 1796, under the title c
"Letters of Sir John Falstaff," with a ded
cation (printed in black letter) "to Maste
Samuel Irelaunde," which those who knew
Lamb at the time believed to be his."

In his earliest extant letter (1796), Lam
writes to Coleridge :—

"White is on the eve of publishing (he took the limit from Vortigern) Original Letters of Falstaff, Shallow, etc., a copy you shall have when it comes out. They are without exception the best imitations I ever saw."

Again, a few weeks afterwards to the same correspondent:—

"White's Letters are near publication; could you review 'em, or get 'em reviewed? Are you not connected with the *Critical Review*? . . The whole work is full of goodly quips and rare fancies, 'all deeply masked like hoar antiquity'—much superior to Dr. Kenrick's *Falstaff's Wedding*."*

It seems probable that Coleridge exerted himself, in consequence of this request, to draw some attention to the little book: whether through his good offices or otherwise the following notice of it appeared in the *Critical Review* for June, 1797:—

"The humorous characters of Shakespeare have seldom been successfully imitated. Dr. Kenrick wrote a play called

* Falstaff's Wedding. A Comedy. Being a Sequel to the second part of the play of King Henry the 4th, by W. Kenrick. Lond, 1760, pp. 83.

Falstaff's Wedding, in which he introduced the merry Knight and his companions; but the peculiar quaintness of the character was lost by being sunk in modern wit. The author of the little work before us has, we think, been somewhat more successful, and must have given his days and nights to the study of the language of Falstaff, Dame Quickly, Slender, etc. His object, indeed, seems to be to ridicule the late gross imposture of Norfolk-street; and certain it is that had these letters been introduced into the world, prepared in the manner of the Ireland MSS., the internal evidence would have spoken more loudly in their favour. But in whatever esteem they may be held as imitations, they argue no small portion of humour in the writer, who, we understand, is a young man, and this his first attempt."

Some months earlier a notice equally laudatory, due also probably to special influence, appeared in the *Monthly Review* for November, 1796:—

"It was not to be expected that the late extraordinary attempt to work on the national credulity by the pretended Shakespearian reliques, should pass without the gibes of the witty, as well as the sober animadversions of the grave and learned.

. . . . The writer before us has taken occasion, from this memorable experiment, to amuse himself and his readers with a supposed collection of Letters between Falstaff and the personages connected with him in the plays of Shakespeare; in which he has shown considerable talents for humour, with a good deal of ingenuity in imitating the language and manners of characters sketched out by our great dramatist. Not that it would be difficult frequently to catch him tripping in an expression, or a circumstance, not belonging to the assumed period; but where the purpose is only a laugh, there is no need for criticism to look so narrowly. . . . The fustian of antient Pistol, the enigmatical brevity of Nym, the gossiping of Shallow and his man Davy, the pedantry of the Welsh parson, the simplicity of Slender, are all personated in various letters with success; and several humorous incidents are imagined, suitable to the times and characters."

"The work was neglected," says Talfourd, "although Lamb exerted all the influence he subsequently acquired with more popular writers to obtain for it favou able notices, as will be seen from various passages in his letters. He stuck, how-

ever, gallantly by his favourite protégé; and even when he could little afford to disburse sixpence, he made a point of buying a copy of the book whenever he discovered one amidst the refuse of a bookseller's stall, and would present it to a friend in the hope of making a convert. He gave me one of these copies soon after I became acquainted with him, stating that he had purchased it in the morning for sixpence, and assuring me I should enjoy a rare treat in the perusal."*

To Manning, Lamb writes:—

"I hope by this time you are prepared to say the *Falstaff Letters* are a bundle of the sharpest, queerest, profoundest humours of any these juice-drained latter times have spawned. I should have advertised you that the meaning is frequently hard to be got at; and so are the future guineas that now lie ripening and aurifying in the womb of some undiscovered Potosi; but dig, dig, dig, dig, Manning!"†

Later in life, when he had himself

* Talfourd's "Letters of Charles Lamb, with a Sketch of his Life," Lond. 1837, vol. i., pp. 12-13.

† Letters of C. L., i., 189-190.

grown to fame, Lamb's delight in the book of his school-fellow and early companion had in nowise diminished, and he contributed a special notice of Falstaff's Letters, signed with the four asterisks that distinguish his papers, to Leigh Hunt's journal, *The Examiner*, September 5, 1819.

"A copy of this work," he begins, "sold at the Roxburgh sale for five guineas. We have both before and since that time picked it up at stalls for eighteenpence. Reader, if you shall ever light upon a copy in the same way, we counsel you to buy it. We are deceived if there be not in it much of the true Shakespearian stuff. We present you with a few of the Letters, which may speak for themselves."

After quoting from the first, third and fourth of Falstaff's Letters to the Prince,* Lamb continues :—

"How say you, reader, do not these inventions smack of Eastcheap? Are they not nimble, forgetive, evasive? Is not the humour of them elaborate, cogitabund, fanciful? Carry they not the true image and superscription of the father which begat them? Are they not steeped all over in cha-

* Pages. 2, 9, 19.

racter—subtle, profound, unctuous? Is not here the very effigies of the Knight? Could a counterfeit Jack Falstaff come by these conceits? Or are you, reader, one who delights to drench his mirth in tears? You are, or peradventure, have been a lover; a "dismissed bachelor," perchance, one that is "lass-lorn." Come, then, and weep over the dying bed of such a one as thyself. Weep with us the death of poor Abraham Slender."

He then quotes Davy's letter to Shallow, announcing Slender's death,* and concludes thus:—

"Should these specimens fail to rouse your curiosity to see the whole, it may be to your loss, gentle reader; but it will give small pain to the spirit of him that wrote this little book, my fine-tempered friend, J.W.—for not in authorship or the spirit of authorship, but from the fulness of a young soul, newly kindling at the Shakespeariana flame, and bursting to be delivered of rich exuberance of conceits—I had almost said *kindred with those of the full Shakespearian genius itself*—were these letters dictated. We remember when the inspira-

* See p. 115-117.

tion came upon him, when the plays of Henry IV. were first put into his hands. We think at our recommendation he read them, rather late in life, though still he was but a youth. He may have forgotten, but we cannot, the pleasant evenings which ensued at the Boar's Head (as we called our tavern, though in reality the sign was not that, nor the street Eastcheap,—for that honoured place of resort has long since passed away), when over our pottle of sherris he would talk you nothing but pure *Falstaff* the long evenings through. Like his, the wit of J.W. was deep, recondite, imaginative, full of goodly figures and fancies. Those evenings have long since passed away, and nothing comparable to them has come in their stead, or can come. We have heard the chimes at midnight."

About a year-and-a-half later, when reprinting this notice of Lamb's in *The Indicator*,* Leigh Hunt prefaced it with the following remarks:—

"Agreeably to our plan of noticing such works as either demand a particular kind of introduction to the public, or do not appear to be appreciated as they deserve, we

* January 24, 1821.

repeat a criticism written by a friend on the above Letters. Not long after it appeared in the *Examiner*, the author who was its subject, died. His name was James White; and many who knew nothing of him as a writer, will recollect being familiar with his name in the unromantic title of an agent for newspapers. Not the least, indeed, of his Shakespearian qualities, was an indifference to fame. He was also, like his great inspirer, a gentleman. He was one among the many living writers who passed their boyhood in Christ's Hospital, where he held an office sometime after quitting it. We remember, as he passed through the cloisters, how we used to admire his handsome appearance, and unimprovable manner of wearing his new clothes."

The following is from *The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers*, one of the earlier Essays of *Elia*:—

"My pleasant friend Jem White . . . instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis,

confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who, relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper, (all is not soot which looks so,) was quoited out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. James White, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion Bigod, ordinarily ministered to the other

two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table—for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing "the gentleman," and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings —how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors—how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some desperado, declaring it "must to the pan again to be browned. for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating" —how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony,—how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it

were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom ; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts—" The King,"—" the Cloth,"—which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering ;— and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, " May the Brush supersede the Laurel !" All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a "Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so," which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

> Golden lads and lasses must,
> As chimney-sweepers, come to dust—

" James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died—of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the

pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever."*

In another Elian essay "On some of the Old Actors," we find the following humorous anecdote of White in connexion with Dodd, the famous comedian:—

"My merry friend, Jem White, had seen him one evening in Aguecheek, and recognising Dodd the next day in Fleet Street, was irresistibly impelled to take off his hat and salute him as the identical Knight of the preceding evening, with a "Save you, *Sir Andrew.*" Dodd, not at all disconcerted at this unusual address from a stranger, with a courteous half-rebuking wave of the hand, put him off with an "Away, *Fool.*"

The following note was written by the late Mr. John Matthew Gutch, of Bristol, on the fly-leaf of his copy of the Falstaff Letters, and was communicated by him in a letter, now in the present publisher's possession, addressed to the late Dr. Philip Bliss of Oxford, in the year 1852:—†

* London Magazine, May, 1822.

† The copy of Falstaff's Letters from which the present reprint is made formerly belonged to Dr. Bliss, and is accompanied by Mr. Gutch's original autograph letter. Dr. Bliss bought it of Kerslake of Bristol, and notes that it was not in the Bodleian Catalogue in 1843.

"These letters were the production of my old schoolfellow, James White, with incidental hints and corrections by another schoolfellow, Charles Lamb.

"Amongst his friends, White was familiarly called 'Sir John.' I was present with him at a masquerade, when he personated Sir John Falstaff, in a dress borrowed from the wardrobe of Covent Garden Theatre, through the kindness of Fawcett, the comedian. His imitation of the character, or I should say personation, excited great mirth and applause, as well as considerable jealousy from some of the company present, supposed to be hired actors for the occasion; who, with much ill will, procured a rope and held it across the room (at the Pantheon in Oxford Street), and White was obliged to take a leap over the rope to escape being thrown down. The exertion he underwent by this interruption, added to the weight of the dress, injured his health for some days afterwards.

"We were at this time in the habit of meeting at the "Feathers" in Hand Court, Holborn, to drink nips of Burton ale, as they were called. One of our friends, who was particularly fond of the beverage, was called 'Nipperkin.'

"White was a remarkably open-hearted,

joyous companion; very intimate with the Lamb family, who were then lodging in Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

"White married a daughter of Faulder,* the bookseller, the fortunate purchaser of the copyright of Paley's works. He died, I think, in 1822,† leaving a widow and three children. White was an idolater of Shakespeare. He had always several of his expressions and epithets at his ready command, and generally interlarded his conversation with them. He was the person alluded to in one of Lamb's Essays in Elia, who treated the chimney-sweepers in Smithfield at St. Bartholomew's fair. I was present at two of the Sausage feasts."

Robert Southey in a letter written to Edward Moxon (Keswick, Feb. 2, 1836), after the death of Charles Lamb, and containing reminiscences of his early years, says:—

"His (Lamb's) most familiar friend, when I first saw him, [in the winter of 1794-5], was White, who held some office at Christ's Hospital, and continued intimate

* Mr. Carew Hazlitt prints this name as "Faulder" ; and makes the next sentence refer to his(F.'s) death, which it is obviously not intended to do.

† The correct date of White's death seems rather, according to Leigh Hunt's statement, to have been 1819 or 1820.

with him as long as he lived. . . . He and Lamb were joint authors of the Original Letters of Falstaff. . . . Lamb, Lloyd, and White were inseparable in 1798; the two latter at one time lodged together, though no two men could be imagined more unlike each other. Lloyd had no drollery in his nature; White seemed to have nothing else. You will easily understand how Lamb could sympathise with both."*

"One can scarcely help feeling," says Mr. Carew Hazlitt in an interesting volume of Elian waifs and strays, "that if Lamb owed to Coleridge the earliest expansion and enrichment of his mind, and to Southey something of that humour and habit of putting thoughts and images into quaint modern-antique clothing, he was also not altogether without obligations to James White, author of the *Falstaff Letters*. It was when Lamb and his family were in Little Queen Street, and their fortunes were at the lowest ebb, that White published this little volume. Its sale was nominal. Its fate was curious. Some thought it to be Lamb's; others thought it to be White's; a few (and these were on the right scent) deemed it to be a

* Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey, Lond. 1850, vol. vi., pp. 286-287.

partnership to which Lamb had contributed suggestions, and White the remainder.

"Lamb's naturally cheerful and almost mercurial temperament receives, perhaps, its earliest illustration from his concern in the book referred to. At a point of time when we know that he was in circumstances of the utmost indigence and domestic wretchedness, he could summon animal spirits to take an active interest in a publication which was not in the least degree likely to be remunerative, and which was merely a facetious literary hoax. I do not at all know what Lamb's personal views may have been; but it has been conjectured that White was induced to embark in the undertaking to denote his contempt for the Ireland forgeries, and derision of the public credulity. But he could hardly have expected that the world would take so many years to come at the true character of his own performance, and that at the sale of the Duke of Roxburghe's library, as late as 1812, a copy would fetch a ridiculous sum as the genuine Falstaff Correspondence. The purchaser shall be nameless!

"Spurious as White's lucubration was, and unsatisfactory, in some respects, as we may consider Lamb's connexion with it to have been, we must not be sure that it has

not the merit of having first directed the attention of the latter* to Shakespearian letters."†

"Is not the germ of Lamb's inestimable prolusion upon Roast Pig," writes some one on the fly-leaf of Dr. Bliss's‡ copy, "to be found at p. xii—xiv of the Preface to this quaint and humorous production? §

"At Mrs. Quickly's demise they devolved, among other outlandish papers, . . to her heiress-at-law, an elderly maiden sister, who, unfortunately for all the world, and to my individual eternal sorrow and regret of all the dishes in the culinary system, was fond of roast pig.

"A curse on her Epicurean guts, that could not be contented with plain mutton, like the rest of her Ancestors!

---

* We may be quite sure that the exact reverse was the case (see *Examiner* notice, *suprà*, p. xiii..)

† Mary and Charles Lamb; Poems, Letters and Remains, by W. Carew Hazlitt. *Lond.* 1874, pp. 154, 155.

‡ Not "Mr. Gutch's copy," as Mr. Hazlitt strangely calls it.

§ "It really seems not unlikely," says Mr. Hazlitt, "that such was the case. Who knows but that Lamb was part author of that same Preface? An interesting problem, indeed when we reflect that of all Eliana, this Dissertation upon Roast Pig is very nearly the most familiar and dear to us all; and

"Reader, whenever as journeying on ward in thy epistolary progress, a chasr should occur to interrupt the chain of event I beseech thee blame not me, but curse th rump of roast-pig. This maiden-sister, cor ceive with what pathos I relate it, absolutel made use of several no doubt invaluabl letters, to shade the jutting protuberance of that animal from disproportionate ex coriation in its circuitous approaches t the fire."

A recent and more voluminous *jeu d'es prit* on the Falstaffian circle, the designe and author of which were probably nc unindebted to White's book, at least for th suggestion of it, is entitled "The Life of Si John Falstaff, illustrated by George Cruik shank, with a Biography of the Knight fror Authentic Sources by Robert B. Brough,2 plates and vignette on wrapper, in ten shi ling parts, 8vo. Lond. Longmans, 1857-8.

From the Preface to this volume, we ex tract the following remarks, which may fit

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perhaps, *nemo scit quominus*, those astounding re velations on the first principles of Crackling wer in embryo in the author's brain years upon year before they were matured and presented to th world." (p. 157.)

ngly close our little monograph ;—

" The whole range of imaginative literature affords no instance of a fictitious personage ranking, almost inseparably, in the public faith with the characters of actual history, parallel to that of the inimitable Falstaff of Shakespeare. . . The peculiar association of Falstaff with events that are known to have occurred, and personages who are known to have lived,—added to the fact that his character has been developed to greater length and with more apparent fondness than the poet was wont to indulge in,—make it a matter of positive difficulty to disbelieve that Falstaff actually lived, and influenced the age he is assumed to have belonged to,—as much as to doubt that Henry V. conquered at Agincourt, that Hotspur was irascible, and Glendower conceited."

The full titles of the first and second issues of Falstaff's Letters (bearing date 1796 and 1797 respectively) are here appended. The body of the book was never reprinted, though the author would doubtless have looked upon that as " a consummation devoutly to be wished for."

There is no difference except in the title, which was evidently reprinted for trad reasons to push the sale; the words "secon edition" being, to speak euphemistically, myth.

1st Title:—

Original Letters, &c. / of / Sir John Fa staff / and / his Friends; / now first mad public by a gentleman, / a descendant of Dame Quickly, / from / Genuine Manu scripts / which have been in the possession of the / Quickly Family / near four hundrec years.—London: / Printed for the Author; and published by / Messrs. G. G. and J Robinsons, Paternoster-row; / J. Debrett Piccadilly; and Murray and / Highley, No 32 Fleet-street, / 1796. (pp. xxiv. 123.)

2nd Title:—

Original Letters, &c. / of / Sir John Fal staff / selected from / Genuine MSS. / whicl have been in the possession of / Dam Quickly / and / her descendants / near fou hundred years.—The Second Edition. / Dedicated to / Master Samuel Irelaunde. / London: / Published by, &c. / 1797. (pp. xxiv. 123.)

* *e. g.*, the *Erratum* (page 90, line 15), and direction on p. xxiv to correct it, remain the same in both issues.

Original Letters, &c.

OF

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

Original Letters, &c.

OF

IR JOHN FALSTAFF

AND

HIS FRIENDS;

)W FIRST MADE PUBLIC BY A GENTLEMAN,
A DESCENDANT OF

DAME QUICKLY,

FROM

GENUINE MANUSCRIPTS

WHICH HAVE BEEN IN THE POSSESSION
OF THE

QUICKLY FAMILY
NEAR FOUR HUNDRED YEARS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR;

AND PUBLISHED BY

SSRS. G. G. AND J. ROBINSONS, PATERNOSTER-ROW;
. DEBRETT, PICCADILLY; AND MURRAY AND
IIGHLEY, NO. 32, FLEET-STREET.

1796.

DEDICATYONE.

To Maſter Samuel Irelaunde.

Right Curteis and Erudite Syrre,

NOWEN unto you it is whatte maner of
e there be in thys age, who deeme they doe
ynde mochel ſerbyce, whan in theyre leud
they make mocke at trew ſeyence, whych
eth for the moſt parte, it ſholde ſeeme, in
tices we habe lefte us of antiquitie. Theſe
nne, who thinke ſcorne of payns-takeing
s (like you or me) who from the mynes
ote tyme by dynte of toyle do brynge forthe
w the pretious golde and the ſylbere, (where-

in it may not be farre from our diſcourſe to
marke after whatte faſhyone the mynes I h
diſcuſſe doe differ from mynes phyſic or natur
In as mochе as theſe latter doe renderre u
theyre treaſures yette being rude, and (as me
comonly ſaien) in the oarre; whereas thoſe m
intellectual, abounden in a ſorte of metal, why
cometh forthe ommyngled wythe baſer ma
and bearynge engraben onne it the marke
impreſſe, whyche to menne ſkylful in ſ
thynges, and candide, dothe notifie and a
its authenticitie. Peradbenture, neede is
ſholde here fetche inſtaunce from thatte trew
and ryche bein of poesye dugge out in thei
days by that younge Briſtowyan, and whyche
found myndes dyd ebidence a genuine byrthe.
there be, who ſtycke notte to affyrme th
antique Rowley was noe oder thanne the fir
Chatterton, therein erring.) Bote thys
mayne digreſsyone from the matter in
tho' therein I ſtande notte alone, having

exem

exemplar in thatte famole Wight of Antiquitie, the Latine poet Uergilius (as Dan Chaucer 'clepeth him aryghte, whom the mineynge mouthe of after tymes mys-nameth Virgil.) Alfoe if neede were, I might here cite the exemplar of thatte grete Clerke himfelfe, of whom his pupil Spenfer wele affyrmeth thatte he is a "Well of "Englyfhe undefyled." After thys fathyone he fpeaketh. And now letten us come forthwithe to *the main fubjecte of our difcourfe.*

Thofe rare gyftes of Fortuna to menne, the lyghtynge upon loft recordes, and the inventyone* of MS. habe in thys oure daye been farre outdonne by thatte rare difcoverie by yourfelfe made. Te[illegible] curteis Syrre, was it by fpade and by m[illegible]ie thatte you dyd fynde thefe goodlye thyng[illegible] Were thofe fhrewde knabes caterers for y[illegible]ho dyd fathome a grabe for Miſtrelſe *Ophe*[illegible] Thofe madde rogues who dyd poke

* *In*[illegible]*yone, or difcoverie, from* the Latine verbe, invenio.

agaynſte the ſcull of a droll Jeſterre, thereby affordynge moche matter of mathematycale ſonne for Maſter Laurence Sterne? Methinks you doe call to life agayne thatte ſwote ſwanne of Avonne, whoſe Songes dyd ſounde ſo pleaſaunt in the eares of thatte peerleſse Mayden Quene and renowned victrix of Spayne, Elizabeth. Bote by the pryce ſette upon your labours by the wyttes of the age, it ſholde ſeeme lamentable matter of facte, howe moche poeſy, and the pryme phanſies and conceipts of connynge menne are fallen into contempte in theſe the worldis laſt dayes. Natheleſs, Maſter Irelaunde, letten us not be fruiteleſslye caſte downe—The tyme dothe haſte approche, nay eben now is cloke at honde, when the ob[illegible]rged cloudes of ſcepticyſme muſte incontinent[illegible]aniſh before conviction's ſerener Welkin, [illegible] Edmonde ſhall in bayne reſume hys labou[illegible] Arreſte thyne eyne—looke backe atte th[illegible]odlye figure of the auntient Knighte—naye, l[illegible] notte curſorye, it is the impreſse of a ryghte [illegible]rable

[illegible]cture

picture traunſmitted downewardes throughe oure houſe forre foure hondredde yeares.—Seeſt thou notte the antique characteres ygrabed onne the Belte? Doubtleſse they doe reflecte a lighte collaterale uponne thy clerkiſh manuſcryptes; andе doubtleſse by a twofolde operatyone doe they confyrme unto the woꝛlde by theyre evidence the truth of the Falſtaffe Letteres. To conclude; the matter of facte (as ſoe it ſholde ſeeme) muſte be pleaſaunt and gratefull untoe thee, Maſter Irelaunde, to knowe thatte in the dayes of the Fifth Henry an anceſtor of thyne was a maker of Trunke Hoſe, or as it is ſpoken of in theſe moderne tymes, a maker of Pantaloones.

Truſtyng thatte poſteritie ſhall yet remunerate us for oure undertakynges (whyche are ſimylare) wythe a lyke portyone of laud and prayſe, I doe commende thee unto thye beſte fortunes.

Thy fellow-labourer in the mynes of antiquitie, and moſte humble ſerbante to commande,

* * * * * *.

PREFACE.

OF all the valuable remains of Antiquity, the world has ever eſpecially patroniſed thoſe, which any ways tend to develope the characters of men eminent in their day.—The Curate's Sermons we can ſubſcribe to from motives of humanity to his Widow; not to hint at their utility, adminiſtered occaſionally, as narcotics. A ſimilar impulſe, perhaps a fellow-feeling, endears us to the Author, whoſe taylor is importunate.—But the familiar papers, and epiſtolary tablets, of a man renown'd among his cotem-

poraries, famous through ſucceeding centuries, happy be his dole, who ſhall reſcue from the Epicurean tooth of Vandal Moth accurs'd!—The Antiquarian ſhall ever preſent him the right hand of fellowſhip; nor leſs eſteem the yellow colourings, laid on their nibbled ſurface by the kindly hand of time, than the mellow hues, with which the ſame friendly touch hath perfected ſome undoubted work of Guido, or the Caracci.

I am happy in preſenting the world with a ſeries of moſt intereſting manuſcript letters, &c.— They were found by Mrs. Quickly, Landlady of the Boar Tavern in Eaſtcheap, in a private drawer, at the left hand corner of a walnut-tree eſcrutoire, the property of Sir John Falſtaff, after the good Knight's death.——At Mrs. Quickly's

Quickly's demiſe, which happened in Auguſt, 1419, they devolved, among other Outlandiſh papers, ſuch as leaſes, title-deeds, &c. to her heireſs at law, an elderly maiden ſiſter; who, unfortunately for all the world, and to my individual eternal ſorrow and regret, of all the diſhes in the culinary ſyſtem, was fond of roaſt pig.

A curſe on her Epicurean guts, that could not be contented with plain mutton, like the reſt of her Anceſtors!

Reader, whenever as journeying onward in thy epiſtolary progreſs, a chaſm ſhould occur to interrupt the chain of events, I beſeech thee blame not me, but curſe the rump of roaſt pig. This maiden-ſiſter, conceive with what pathos I relate it, abſolutely made uſe of ſeveral, no doubt invaluable letters,

letters, to ſhade the jutting protuberances of that animal from diſproportionate excoriation in its circuitous approaches to the fire.

My friend, Mr. *****, decypherer of ancient records, on ſhewing him the manuſcripts, and communicating my misfortune, ſlily hinted at his poſſeſſion of ſome curious yellow papers. — However gratified I might feel at this inſtance of his friendſhip, however practicable I might conceive it to forge the mere manual characters, how are the eſcapes, the burſts of humour, of Sir John Falſtaff to be delineated, his quips, and his gybes? No, Sirs, I might as well attempt, (with every reſpect to Alchymiſts, Amalgamators, &c.—Gentlemen, I bow to you) I might as well attempt to incorporate

porate Solar-eſſence with Epping-butter.

It may be objected againſt the authenticity of my Manuſcripts, that they do not appear in the proper garb of their age.—To this I anſwer, that I do not make them public for the gratification of the Virtuoſo, but for the amuſement of the whole world; three-fourths of whom are too far advanced in life, to commence their ſtudies in the moſt noble ſcience of antient orthography. Far be it from me to ſhrink from the inveſtigation of the ſcholar, or the critic. Gentlemen, my cloſet is open to you—I very reſpectfully entreat your entrance. From your convictions I anticipate, I already hear, the united commands of the whole world vibrate in my ear, to bring forward other Manuscripts in my poſſeſſion; Manu-

ſcripts,

ſcripts, which contain many very important traits, and features of character, in Sir John Falſtaff, but lightly touched upon by Shakſpere.—What an immenſe acquiſition to the Theatres!

I had once, indeed, thought of giving them a dramatic form, for the purpoſe of communicating them to the Manager of Covent-garden; but the ſplendid taſte of the age, inceſſantly calling on him for gaudes and ſhews, the very nature of which muſt neceſſarily arreſt his whole attention, I fear'd they might be laid on the ſhelf, "that "Bourn whence no Traveller re-"turns;" and thus, with other valuable writings, be loſt to the world. Superadded to this, a ſpecies of delicacy I cannot deſcribe, 'tis nearly allied to pride, forbad my parting with them unſolicited.

unſolicited. Perhaps a reſpectful application from the manager, Mr. Harris, through the medium of Mr. F******, or any other diſtinguiſhed performer, might conduce———But really this is ſo delicate a ſubject, that—

It may be aſked, how they came into my poſſeſſion?——I beſeech thee, good Mr. Inquiſitive, urge not the queſtion.—Of all the occupations ſubſervient to the views of man, none was ever to me ſo vituperative, as that of a Publican.—What the Street-walker is in the fleſh, that is the Publican in the ſpirit, amenable to the caprice of every unbridled paſſion.—And yet, that I ſhould have emigrated from the loins of a Publican, be bred, no, not *bred*, born and begotten of a Publican! Whence can the fatality ariſe!

Reader,

Reader, the Manuſcript came to me by direct inheritance.

Maſter Quickly, Maſter Quickly, amid thy daily roar of ſubaltern baſe-born* revelry, thou art little conſcious of the illuſtrious perſonages that once honoured thy roof;—of the memorials that yet remain of their being to an eſtranged branch of thy race. The names of *Falſtaff*, *Hal*, *Corporal Bardolph*, are ſtrange to thee.—— I do not marvel: for they have ceaſed, Maſter Quickly, to be on thy ſcore.—Yet if thy blood is not utterly degenerate, if any particle remains to thee of the dignity of our houſe, put thy pipe into thy mouth, and walk ſedately with me.

* The Boar's-head in Eaſtcheap, now a common pot-houſe.

A ſage

A ſage writer remarks, tho' time obliterateth, yet not relentleſs in his ravages, he leaveth ſome ſlight traditionary token to ſooth the memory of paſt times.

Shut the door.——Thou art now, where Sir John was want to ſolace himſelf, in the identical Pomegranate.* Doth not the Genius of the place ſilently rebuke thy pride, that hath taken a flight ſo far beneath thy anceſtry?

The Boar's-head, in days of yore the reſort of every quality proper and handſome, to become a rendezvous for the many-ſpecied ſcions of the mechanick-ſtock! The Pomegranate,

* A Room ſo called in the Boar Tavern, which Sir John was partial to.

ancient

ancient receptacle of illuſtrious Wits, Bloods, who " Daff'd the world aſide, " and bid it paſs," to be choak'd with the ſeeds of every baſer plant! It is not well—By the fat Friar's ſcalp of merry Sherwood, it is not well.

Thy grandam, Maſter Quickly, was a Wight, in whom the culinary attainments of man delighted to reſide. She mingled nectareous ſack—Thou art more—Thou art a pious houſeholder.—In the twelfth hour of the night, when thy cattle, and the ſtranger, and the aſs, and all that is within thy gate, are aſſembled to offer up their oriſons, call thou aloud upon the indignant manes of the departed Knight—confeſs thy degeneracy—promiſe purgation of his polluted haunts, and if ſo his ſhade will be pacified, that the merry Sackbut ſhall ſupercede the

the clanking of pewter, throughout the Boar.—At ſuch an hour, if there be any convexity in thy roofs, expect thou a ſolemn anſwer.

I have yet a point to ſettle, and then I leave thee to the buſtle of thy domiciliary regeneration.—Thou haſt miſuſed me damnably, Maſter Quickly.—Not Zeno with all his Stoics about him—not Job with all his oxen about him, would bear my wrongs patiently. Had I blaſted the Boar's good name, had I libidinouſly approach'd mine hoſteſs, and wound a recheat on thy brow, thou hadſt ſome ſhadow of reaſon; but to maltreat a kind, philanthropick, well-diſpoſed Gentleman, diſintereſtedly coming forward for the amuſement of the whole world, all his own concerns ſtagnant! oh! 'tis very foul and unmannered.—I deſire thou

wilt

wilt go to Mr. Robinſon's, and take ſix copies of this my publication, paying the full price for each, individually.

Thou ſeeſt, I am incontinently prone to lenity, even to the very detriment of my fortunes.—Canſt thou imagine, that any other writer of my merits, elaborate, cogitabund, fanciful in the garniſhment of a quaint conceit, and reeking with my diſappointments, would be pacified with ſo trivial a conceſſion? I look'd to have ſeen a ſmug proper Gentleman ſtep from his chair in the Pomegranate, and vote each member a ſet of the Knight's adventures.—I look'd I ſhould have received ten pounds; and, by the Martyrdom of holy Polycarp, thou haſt no more Club, than is compounded of labouring ſmiths, circumcis'd Anglo-Hebrews,

brews, and revolted apprentices; ſuch a farrago of unhous'd Arabs, as Lazarus himſelf would have ſcorn'd conſortance with.—Oh! thou haſt much miſus'd me —— a'God's name, let the ſtable be cleanſed—to work with Herculean brawn! To work! to work! to work!

There is a certain deſcription of writers, whoſe great volubility of genius cannot ſtop calmly and ſoberly to look behind ever and anon, and gather up the errors and abſurdities of a warm imagination.—No —'tis too mechanical for your picked man of genius.—He blindly puſhes forward for the goal, nor ever even ſteps aſide, unleſs indeed, Atalanta-like, to catch at a Golden Apple. Cervantes ſeems to have been of this claſs; or he would certainly have never thought of mounting

ing Dapple on Panza, (I beg Sancho's pardon, I mean Panza on Dapple,) when the rogue Gynes was at the ſame time beſtride him a dozen miles diſtant.

I thank Nature (I think it a bleſſing) for having caſt me in a more phlegmatic mould.——Reader, the Preface is but ſhort—look back—If thou haſt caught me tripping, if I am in ought accountable to thee, I promiſe to explain or rectify in my next edition.

ORIGINAL LETTERS.

*FALSTAFF TO PRINCE HENRY.

HERE, young Gentlemen, go you to the Prince. Robert Shallow, eſq ; hath ſent thee a haunch of Glouceſterſhire veniſon, Hal ; with a good commodity of pippins, carraways, commendations, and remembrances. Ha ! ha ! ha ! I tell thee what, Hal, thou art moſt damnably down in the withers ; thou art, as it were, a Prince without weight.—An I don't plump thee

* The correſpondence appears to have commenced while Sir John ſtopped at Shallow's ſeat in Glouceſterſhire to pick up recruits in his way to York.—Vide the ſecond part of King Henry the Fourth—3d Act.

out

out like a Chriſtmas turkey, then am I a rogue.

Oh! I am ſitting in a neſt of the moſt unfledg'd Cuckows that ever brooded under the wing of Hawk. Thou muſt know, Hal, I had note of a good hale Recruit or two in this neighbourhood. In other ſhape came I not; look to it, Maſter Shallow, that in other ſhape I depart not.—But I know thou art ever all deſire to be admitted a Fellow-Commoner in a jeſt. Robert Shallow, eſq; judgeth the hamlet of COTSWOLD. Doth not the name of Judge horribly chill thee?

With Aaron's rod in his hand, he hath the white beard of Moſes on his chin. In good-ſooth his perpetual countenance is not unlike what thou wouldſt conceit of the momentary one of the lunatic Jew, when he tumbled God's Tables from the Mount.

He hath a quick buſy gait, and a huge Soldier-like beaver, ſurmounted with a Cock-ade. The valorous Juſtice, at the head of

ſome

ſome dozen or two Domeſtics and others, once apprehended a brace of deſerters; and ever ſince doth he aſſume this badge—Ha! ha! ha!

More of this upright Judge (perpendicular as a Pikeman's weapon, Hal,) anon.

I would diſpatch with theſe Bardolph; but the knave's Hands—(I cry thee mercy) his *Mouth* is full, in preventing deſertion among my Recruits. An every Liver among them han't ſtood me in 3 and 40 ſhilling, then am I a naughty Eſcheator.—I tell thee what, Hal, I'd fight againſt my conſcience for never a prince in Chriſtendom but thee. —Oh! this is a moſt damnable cauſe, and the rogues know it—they'll drink nothing but ſack of three and two-pence a gallon, and I enliſt me none but tall puiſſant* Fellows that would quaff me up Fleet-ditch, were it

* It is needleſs to obſerve, that Mouldy, Bullcalf, Wart, Feeble, and Shadow, muſt have formed the able recruits ſir John here alludes to.

filled with ſack—pick'd men, Hal—ſuch as will ſhake my lord of York's mitre. I pray thee, ſweet Lad, make ſpeed—thou ſhalt ſee glorious deeds!

JOHN FALSTAFF.

FALSTAFF TO THE PRINCE.

HA! ha! ha! ſupport me, Hal! ſupport me!—An I don't quake more than when the lunatick ſheriff would ha' carted me for Newgate, there's nought goodly in a cup of ſack.—Oh! I am damnably provided here—Let me pawn as many points in my wind, as dame Prodigal's whelp Neceſſity hath impreſs'd of my chattels for centinel-ſervice in Miſtreſs Urſula's ſhop, and never a ſtitch on 'em would that Bardolph redeem. I might overwhelm myſelf, and rot on the ground.—An there was not a little ſmack of kind-heartedneſs in ſugar-candy, God help old Jack! he might lie in the glebe for brawn-feed.—Here is maſter Robert Shallow,

low, with his rod of juſtice hath done what Sir Colevile, or the Scotchman Douglas, aye, or young Harry himſelf, would have given his ears to atchieve—he hath put me down, Hal. I would to God Cotſwold were in Spain, for there the gentlemen do never laugh—By the Lord, this uncomb'd hemp-ſtalk doth breed more convulſive propenſities in man, than is in a whole fry of ſtricken Finſmen*; and yet is it all unwittingly;—though his countenance be as ſharp as the tweak of a bully, his wit is as benumbing too. Here hath been a whoreſon murderer brought before him; the Elder would enforce my aſſiſtance—ha! ha! ha! —mine, Hal! who was never feated on bench, except indeed at mine hoſteſs's, in the way of unbuttoning to my veſpers after dinner;———and I would to God every geminy of Nuns in his Majeſty's dominions had my diſpoſſeſſion of the frail creature in

* Sir John's conceit is here rather obſcure.—I ſubmit, but with great deference, whether he does not allude to the ſenſitive nature of the Torpedo, which is immediately convulſed on being touched.

their worſhip—they'd not want for miracle-working I can aſſure 'em.—Well, Hal, when I look'd the rogue ſhould be committed for trial, lo! Robert commanded he ſhould be immediately hung up by the gills! 'Twas not that Robert was unjuſt or cruel —no.—Robert quak'd at the ferocious furrows on the rogue's brow.—There was a jail at hand;—the rogue was gyv'd—and yet Robert quak'd—ha! ha! ha! Maſter Silence the Law-giver too favoured ſhrewdly of diſmay—he thought the man might in conſcience be hung—Davy might help his good Coz.—he'd take it upon his word Cotſwold records had it in point—ha! ha! ha! Thou knoweſt, Hal, it was not for me to crop the green ears of a goodly joke-harveſt—I am no April ſcytheſman—with the alacrity of a ſhrewd leafer, I gathered up the errant Gybelings of my brow, and commended their Worſhips' quick adminiſtration of juſtice.—An if the knave had ſwung, what the goodger!—'Stead of county yeomen on a baſe bench, he had his jury of kites and daws to ſit on him, under the

ſweet

ſweet canopy of the ſkies.—But Davy, Davy, Davy, dole'd him a longer life.—This many-ſpecied ſubaltern of maſter Shallow's, being adviſed of the matter, quickly halted in under the yoke of a villainous tub of Jew's-bane, a pannier of newly-ſlucken hog's-blood, or I'm the impotenteſt varlet that ever tilted at lip.—Wouldſt thou believe it, Hal? Barabbas was inſtantly commanded to priſon—Davy, and his crimſon fry, to Shallow were of more import than the charieſt Bona-roba in all Eaſt-cheap to thee, thou naughty hip-o'-the-haw-thorn lover.——Oh! thou would'ſt have diſtill'd moſt damnably, to hear the ſhrill judge and his man, like Judas and the High-prieſt, paſs buſy queſtion and anſwer upon the price of blood!—Davy had tranſported the reeking maſs to Robin Pluck's coiner of puddings—Robin admitted the complexion of the commodity—'twas excellent—but Robin thought half a noble a long ſhot—ha! ha! ha! Maſter Pluck, let me counſel thee—An the wrath of Robert Shallow eſq; be not a commodity of July

weather, maſter Pluck, look to thyſelf—thou wilt be moſt damnably amerc'd, maſter Pluck; thou wilt be as bare as a drawn gooſe, an thou doſt not ſmooth thy ruffled feathers, and compound, maſter Pluck, thou wilt be doubly amerc'd—Robert Shallow, eſquire, hath ſaid it—ha! ha! ha!

I pray God, Bardolph be not whipt for a whoreſon knave—He hath diſpatched a coop of trodden pullet for Eaſtcheap—rare living, Hal! rare ſperm for Sherris! but the rogue hath not adviſed maſter Shallow of their march, and Robert hath a moſt damnable yearning bowel toward his company.—We muſt be chary of their blood, Hal—Do not thou lead them into action ere I do come.—A plague upon all hurry, ſay I.—An it had not been for the overweening Hotbloods at York, who did madly join battle ere valour could arrive to ſhew itſelf, I ſhould have been made a Duke, and now muſt I tarry till thou art King. Well, I ſhall look to be accoutred forth to my dignities, I can aſſure thee—

Some

Some bright emblem to outſhine Courtier-hood—a pretty ſlight model of dame Venus in her evening orbit, or the puiſſant Mars in the inſtant of tilting.——No little mad-cap ſhooting ſtar to twinkle in my portly firmament!

Here is miſtreſs Quickly, mine hoſteſs, doth indite to me for monies.—I am not a walking exchequer—She cannot draw upon my ribs. I would, my ſweet Hal, thou'dſt ſend her to one Harry Monmouth, a ſprightly mad wag of ſome ſix foot high, who doth much reſort unto the Boar tavern. —He is much my debtor.

JOHN FALSTAFF.

FALSTAFF TO THE PRINCE.

I PR'YTHEE, Hal, lend me thy 'kerchief. —An thy unkindneſs ha'nt ſtarted more ſalt gouts down my poor old cheek, than my good rapier hath of blood from foemen's

gaſhes in 5 and 30 year's ſervice, then am I a very ſenſeleſs mummy.

I ſquander away in drinkings monies belonging to the ſoldiery! I do deny it—they have had part—the ſurplus is gone in charity—accuſe the pariſh-officers—make them reſtore—the whoreſon wardens do now put on the cloaca of ſupplication at the church doors, intercepting gentlemen for charity, forſooth!—'Tis a robbery, a villainous robbery! to come upon a gentleman reeking with piety, God's book in his hand, brimfull of the ſacrament! Thou knoweſt, Hal, as I am but man, I dare in ſome ſort leer at the plate and paſs, but as I have the body and blood of Chriſt within me, could I do it? An I did not make an oblation of a matter of ten pound after the battle of Shrewſbury, in humble gratitude for thy ſafety, Hal, then am I the verieſt tranſgreſſor denounced in God's code.—But I'll ſee them damn'd ere I'll be charitable again. Let 'em coin the plate—let them coin the holy chalice.

To

To ſay that I have not naturaliſed maſter Silence, that I ſtand not on the debtor ſide of accounts with him, would be horribly forgetful and incorrect—to ſay that he ſhall ſee my coinage in the way of honourable reimburſement, gentleman-like repayment, would ſavour much of honeſty, 'tis true, but more (I confeſs it, I confeſs it, Hal) of leaſing.

To ſay that I feel not a kind of tendré for maſter Robert Shallow, while he hath ſack, beeves, with emanating bowels towards old ſir John, would beſpeak me the Infidel, the Jew—but to confeſs (ſaving a certain reſpect due to the aſſeveration of my ſweet Hal) that I love the man Shallow, or the man Silence, in other ſhape or degree than as the leech loveth the temple, much leſs that I have ſquandered monies on theſe raw bare-brain'd Yonkers, fit only to be worn on Bankrupt days by Uncertificated Wits—to confeſs that I have familiariſed my perſon to their companies, to the detriment of thy father's affairs, ſetting the ſeemlineſs of

gentlemanhood aſide, would be lying in my throat through the falſe paſſage of my mouth, would render the baſe pander my tongue worthy the center of a pewter-diſh, to be crimp'd with capon, and engulph'd for a diſobedient Jonas.

For thy father's ſickneſs, I am not Eſculapius, or I would prune and reſtore the old oak—but it hath ſhed it's acorns, and now comes winter—Is not the progreſſion natural?

No more of the departed monies, Hal, an thou loveſt me.—Would'ſt thou rake up the aſhes of the dead?—Nay, an if that's thy humour, then muſt Pluto become a child of ſight.

JOHN FALSTAFF.

THE

THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER TO HIS HIGHNESS OF WALES.

If to do away inſinuations of diſaffection be as acceptable to a magnanimous prince, as it is indiſpenſible to the ſubtle honour of a repreſentative of Chriſt Jeſus, I ſhall feel the leſs compunction in turning for a moment the current of your Highneſs's weighty thoughts; but they are already here; they muſt flow, my lord, with the channelled blood of the thouſands of unabſolved ſouls lately ſacrificed at the ſhrine of the Arch-deceiver Rebellion.

Among the many Lords, Knights, and Eſquires, reſorting to Shrewſbury to render Oblations for the iſſue of this eventful conteſt, was the knight ſir John Falſtaff.—This layman, who accuſeth me to your highneſs of diſaffection, hath ſullied his name in arms by defiling the ſacred temple of his God. He is excommunicate; nor can aught, ſave the Toe of the Almighty's vice-

viceregent ſave him from everlaſting perdition. My lord, while other barons and knights, his majeſty's liege-ſubjects, were making rich oblations and endowments for the maimed ſoldiery, while the prieſthood chaunted forth the excellencies of charity, and the offertory laboured with coſtly gifts, the ſolemnities were ſuddenly arreſted by the clamours of ſir John Falſtaff, and a crew of diſorderly retainers, for bread and wine. The functionaries of the Higheſt were blaſphemouſly attacked with groſs ſpeech and uncouth phraſe*, and the ſacred wine riotouſly and tumultuouſly raviſhed from their hands. Menaces of your highneſs's diſpleaſure were muted from his unclean lips, and the vaſſals of the holy Virgin excited to irreverend demeanour by geſticulations more ſeemly to the ſpontaneous ſoil of youth, than the furrowed glebb of age. They were recreantly expelled, and ſolemn Excommunication pronounced againſt this impious man, who had profanely tendered

* I fear ancient Piſtol was in this coil.

a copper

a copper groat as an oblation, and libidinouſly drank with carnal appetite the blood of his Redeemer. If here, my lord, be room for treaſon, if the anathema of the church weigh too heavily with this contempt of its juriſdiction, I am content that imputed diſaffection to my liege fill up the balance.

There is another matter, my lord.—Sir John, as I am well adviſed, is no purlieuman. By the ſtatute of his deceaſed majeſty, none is to hunt unpoſſeſſed of certain hereditary lands. This knight hath not the ſubſtance of a pace; yet under the cloak of your Highneſs' ſacred name, his hounds unleaſhed by ſwain-motes, are looſed to every demeſne. His ſoldiers, the curbing yoke of diſcipline ſlipped from their franchiſed necks, yerk at the impreſcript, but ſacred laws of ſociety, and bleed the unredreſſed peaſantry;—nay, himſelf ſtandeth not unaccuſed of certain enormities. In the ejectment of this unworthy man, the ſacred ſervice of the altar was violated. God for-

bid

bid that ſuſpicion ſhould undefervedly call down a two-fold infamy, and blend ſacrilege with impiety; but the very preciſian, my lord, hath here ſcope for liberal conjecture:—the ſilver candleſticks dedicated to the ſervice of the holy Virgin, were ſtolen. True—the unhallowed theft may be aſcribed to other than the knight or his retainers, for the tainted wether doth infect the whole flock: but, my lord, when Judas betrayed his maſter, the tumult of his followers was but a cloak for the—*All hail!*

Your Highneſs' liege-ſubject,

WORCESTER.

THE PRINCE TO FALSTAFF.

AND ſo, Jack, thou didſt piouſly offer up ten pound in humble gratitude for my ſafety—ha! ha! ha!—Here is Ned Poins doth proteſt 'twas much more—In good truth, Percy was a luſty warrior.—How long didſt lay,

lay, Jack? Fifteen minutes, as thou ſay'ſt, by Shrewſbury clock. By the maſs, a very miſer!—Thou ſhould'ſt have ſacrificed fifty times ten pound, and covered a ſcore rood with thy fat Offerings. Had Hotſpur been the minion of the God, farewell Jack! he had certainly miſtaken thee for my greaſe-pot, yea, dipped his ſword in thy ribs, and ſounded a retreat.

I pr'ythee haſt ever beheld Satan, where the Apoſtle hath placed him a tip-toe on the pinnacle of the Temple? Not in Judea, Jack. Thou may'ſt view him, ſans optick, at thy own Jeruſalem, Eaſtcheap, on mine hoſteſs's tapeſtry.—What ſay'ſt thou to a likeneſs of him, with me at thy ſide for a Saviour? Not the hoary Roman, whom the Gaul caught by the chin, could ſhew more ample reverence of beard than doth the tempter (meaning thee), or more meekneſs of carriage (that's myſelf, Jack), than the tempted.

My

My lord of Worceſter, methinks, hath moſt excellent characters.—See here his letter.——By Harry Percy dead, but he ſhould be a pope.—Why he would rate rebellion, that not a Scot would dare to call us Bolingbrokes*, for very dread of his anathema. Canſt thou not help him to the triple crown, Jack; thou, and Bardolph, and Piſtol?—A copper groat, marry, and a pair of ſilver candleſticks, to bribe my lord's Cardinals—ha! ha! ha!——Well, Jack, thou art excommunicate; and whether the boſom of the church ever receives thee again, no matter—There's nobody, I believe, cares leſs than thyſelf. For his holineſs' toe——I pr'ythee haſt good pig's trotters with thy Shallow law-giver?—Which had'ſt rather muzzle?——The barefoot is a pleaſant pilgrimage to Rome.

Ned Poins doth inſiſt thou art nine pounds nineteen ſhillings eight-pence my debtor—

* Probably the contemptuous manner in which the oppoſite party ſpoke of the houſe of Lancaſter.

Why,

Why, thou vaunting Phariſee, what is become of thy ten pound oblation? I tell thee what, Jack,—Here is my father much ſick—I may be a king, heaven knows how ſoon, perchance to-night—If ever thou doſt cloak exceſs beneath the name of Harry the Fifth—if ever receive bribes to conceal rebels, (and this thou knoweſt I am well adviſed of) thy look'd-for exaltation ſhall be on the gallows of Haman*.

Farewell!

FALSTAFF TO THE PRINCE.

Ha! ha! ha! And doſt thou think I would not offer up ten pound for thee? Yea, a hundred—more——But take heed of diſpleaſing in thy ſacrifice. Cain did bring a kid, yea, a firſtling upon the altar,

* Poor ſir John's views were rather confined; only *fifty foot* to look forward to for preferment.

and

and the blaze aſcended not. Abel did gather ſimple herbs, penny-royal, Hal, and muſtard, a four-penny matter, and the odour was grateful.——I had ten pound for the holy offertory—mine ancient Piſtol doth know it—but the angel did arreſt my hand. Could I go beyond the word?—The angel which did ſtretch forth his finger, leſt the good patriarch ſlay his ſon.

That Ned Poins hath more colours than a jay, more abuſe than a taught pie, and for wit——the cuckow's dam may be Fool of the Court to him. I lie down at Shrewſbury out of baſe fear! I melt into roods, and acres, and poles! I tell thee what, Hal, there's not a ſubject in the land hath half my temperance of valour.—Did I not ſee thee combating the man-queller, Hotſpur; yea, in peril of ſubduement? Was it for me to loſe my ſweet Hal without a thruſt, having my rapier, my habergeon, my good ſelf about me? I did lie down in the hope of ſherking him in the rib—Four drummers and a fifer did help me to the ground.

ground.—Didſt thou not mark how I did leer upon thee from beneath my buckler? That Poins hath more ſcurrility than is in a whole flock of diſquieted geeſe.

For the rebels I did conceal, thou ſhould'ſt give me laud.—I did think thou wert already encompaſſed with more enemies than the reſources of man could prevent overwhelming thee; yea, that thou wert the dove on the waters of Ararat, and didſt lack reſting-place. Was it for me to heap to thy manifold diſquiets? Was it for me to fret thee with the advice of more enemies than thou didſt already know of? I could not take their lives, and therefore did I take their monies.—I did fine them, leſt they ſhould 'ſcape, Hal, thou doſt underſtand me, without chaſtiſement;—yea, I fined them for a puniſhment. They did make oath on the point of my ſword to be true men—An the rogues foreſwore themſelves, and joined the Welchman, let them look to it—'tis no 'peachment of my virtue.

Thou

Thou didſt conceit me a cheriſher of rebellion—I muſt hang, forſooth, upon conception!—Fie, Hal, Fie! Didſt thou ever know mother to wean upon *conception?*—Fie!

Mine hoſt Shallow doth greet thee well; he doth proteſt "thou art a good back-"ſwordſman, or the young earl's degree "would never have been lowered;—the "Northumbrians were ever good at fence."

He doth remember the old duke at tournament, Hal.—Ha! ha! ha!

I do purpoſe entertaining the Juſtice at Eaſtcheap—a rare gueſt, Hal,—*Juſtice* at miſtreſs Quickly's; but therefore the more welcome.——Oh! he will give thee the dry laugh till thou art as much disjointed, yea, as the gates of Gaza.—He will be a very Sampſon unto thee—He will pluck thee down.

I come,

I come, maſter Shallow, I come.—I am bidden to supper, Hal.——Let me hear of thee, but a' God's name no more acrimony, an thou loveſt

JACK FALSTAFF.

JUSTICE SHALLOW TO DAVY.

How do affairs go? How do things go on, Davy? Are the ſheep-ſtealers taken? Marry, bid Robin Bratton look to the deer, and let there be a fall among the Pollards that look to the Cleys.—We muſt have a good proſpect, Davy—We don't look far enough—A lord ſhould look far—I muſt have a pedigree conceived—Pelt, the tanner, muſt get ſome ſkins ready, a large ſkin or two—a new lord hath always a new pedigree.—Bid William take the ſtreaked ram from the ewes, and let the 14 acre headland be thrown into the park—marry, for the red wheat—it muſt not appear.—A ſad loſs, Davy, but the rutting muſt have ſcope.

—We

—We muſt enlarge the deer-feld—ſir John loves veniſon.

I hope, Davy, you comport yourſelf as becomes the repreſentative of one of the Quorum. I would be underſtood, that you keep up your dignity, and carry your body diſcreetly, and ſoberly, and ſedately, and not prabble and drink at common houſes.—You are too much given to it, Davy.

It may pleaſe his ſacred majeſty, that I yield up his gracious commiſſion—I ſay, Davy, 'tis a thing that is poſſible; and I could deſire and wiſh, that my couſin Silence ſhould have a doughty helpmate, one who knows the laws of the land, and could enforce his Majeſty's moſt gracious briefs and ordinances.——Your underſtanding is good, Davy, and you have an indifferent knowledge in the ſtatutes.—I could wiſh to ſee you in better proviſion; but indeed you do not comport yourself with that clean decency I could deſire.—Whenever it pleaſeth his moſt gracious majeſty to call for my help

help and aſſiſtance at the Quorum, I ordinarily dine on ſlender pottage—you know it, Davy.—It preſerves me clear and comprehenſible; and, o'my conſcience, you conſume and devour leeks, and cheeſe, and fat bacon, in lieu of your morning hymns and prayers, and ruct at the mouth and elſewhere, and belch, o'my conſcience, as loud as any Caliver, to the great detriment of every thing ſeemly, and in defiance of good rule in ſociety. You muſt correct yourſelf, Davy—you muſt correct yourſelf—It is a difficult point in rooting up ancient habits and cuſtoms, but it would not be kindly and good to make you ſuddenly great with all your ſtains and blotches upon you.—No—'tis meet we firſt grub up and eradicate the weeds, Davy;—and then the ſoil, if indeed it be not too arid, will kindly receive the germen, the ſeed, Davy, of any thing good and palatable.

Take my three-cornered beaver, in which I beheld his laſt moſt gracious Majeſty crowned, and ſee if you can begin to look a

a little creditable. Marry, are the Little Johns ploughed, and in proper and ſoft ſtate for ſowing?—See that it be done, Davy —'tis more than time it were done.—Look to it, Davy.

Bleſs my heart and ſoul!—'twere ſimply a ſufficiency to ſlay any beaſt of burthen.—A matter of ſix ſcore miles in half a ſcore hours!—'Tis four leagues by the ſixty minutes!—Meaſure it by ten, Davy, and it amounts to a point.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE *LORD SHALLOW.

Davy to Ditto.

I WISH your good Worſhip many bleſſings.—Marry, I humbly thank your worſhip for the precepts, and will, with our holy Mary's help, comport myſelf as your

* Davy, I ſuppoſe, anticipated the honours of his maſter.

Worſhip

Worſhip was wont, and ſpeak as much as any he at the Quorum.

*Clement Perkes, your Worſhip, was ſeen in the park yeſternight, when the caſtle was going twelve.—I humbly think he was knocking your Worſhip's deer in the head, and had him ſecured and put in the ſtocks, for the terror of all attempters.——He's a great knave, your Worſhip; and I humbly think, with your Worſhip's leave, of giving him a good whipping.—I'm ſure if he was not after the deer, he wanted to kill the old ram; for h'as got, marry ever ſince he's been in the ſtocks, h'as got, as your Worſhip was wont to ſay, a ſheep-biting face.

What your Worſhip ſays of the weeds is very juſt.—I humbly thank your Worſhip for the beaver.—I humbly ſuppoſe, your Worſhip, it was fellow-mate to the ſun-

* Davy could never away with this Clement Perkes. Vide Henry the IVth.—1ſt Scene of the 5th Act.

coloured doublet your Worſhip was wont to look ſo well in at the Quorum; tho'f it ſits more rinkled upon your Worſhip now than it did formerly; your Worſhip's belly grows thinner and genteeler.—Your Worſhip would not think how it ſits upon me—its cloſe as any mail.——I've clean left off ructing, your Worſhip.

That Clement Perkes has ſpoken flat burglary of your Worſhip.—A' ſays I'm a dog.—Your Worſhip was wont to ſay to a ſaucy malefactor, that his Majeſty was in you, and you in his Majeſty—good.—And a'nt I in your Worſhip, and your Worſhip in me? A' ſays I'm a dog!—I'll have him laid faſt, till your Worſhip ſhall come to give directions at the Quorum, whether he ſhall be hang'd or tranſported.

Would it pleaſe your Worſhip to give directions about the ringers?—Ah! your worſhip, they did ſo do it!—they drank a whole hogſhead of your Worſhip's ale.—William Viſor has been of the peal two and thirty years

years come Lammas, and I humbly beſeech your Worſhip he may have a crown above the reſt.

The headland fences are all down, and the hens are very buſy at getting your Worſhip's crop in.—Fourteen acre of ſeedland's a great matter; but your Worſhip's pullets will thrive againſt the large Knight ſhall accompany your Worſhip to town.—A' loves capon.——Did your Worſhip mark how a' took all the wings and thighs 'twixt his finger and thumb, and put 'em in his great belly, an they had been ſo many plumbs?

Marry, your Worſhip, Robin has ſhot two deer for the pedigrees, as your Worſhip was pleaſed to call 'em.—Maſter Pelt has got the ſkins—Marry, will your Worſhip ſay, whether they are to be tanned like your Worſhip's buckler, or how?—I humbly wait your Worſhip's directions in this point.

ANTIENT PISTOL TO SIR JOHN.

Dated, it ſeems, from Windſor.

SIR Knight, lament—be triſtful—rue—for Bawcockhood is dead, extinct—the maw of Majeſty hath it engulph'd——Kinghood's a thing of nought, a 'ſcutcheon damn'd, of blazonry moſt baſe.—I hold it to my lip, and from my portly lungs call up Sir Æolus to bid the Lazar ſcoul. The King his memories hath graſped by the heel, and dipp'd in Lethe——Or he is mad become; the Cur hath bit him—he doth the thing eſchew, that ſenſes moſt did love.

Thy letter, Knight, in ſpite of yeomen and baſe hounds of Heſperus, which did him circumvent, I did deliver to the quondam Hal. "The man of mickle ſpan "unto his lovely bully"—Thus Antient Piſtol——whereon the Fry of Majeſty, Herodian worms and inſects damn'd alſo, which Lucifer doth hatch upon his morning

ing crown, did mow and chatter like to apes of Ind'. Shall Piſtol ſhoulder'd be, and ſhall he recreant flee before the elbow of baſe ſycophant, and ſhall good phraſe be baſtardis'd? I will revenges have, by Rowen' and her Chalice——I will arouſe and woo the Fates, the ſiſters three—Concubinage is good—and they ſhall brooding on my pillow lay in conſult deep, how flint and ſteel a ſpark may ſtrike to blow up pandourſhip moſt baſe——My heart's a heart of flint——My forefoot eke's moſt ſubtil ——Why then let fellowſhip enſue, let heart and hand combine, and let the web be ſpun——Ulyſſes baffle all!

Sir John, thy Piſtol and thy Legate hath been greeted foul——Not Bardolph, filching Wight, that pluck'd the ſtar to deck his noſe, when blanketed unto the Welkin's height for chewing Baker's Roll, where Baker's Roll ſhould not be chewn——Not Nym, whoſe humour was in pillory to ſtand ycover'd o'er with gold moſt potable for Yonker's ſilver whiſtle ſtol'n,—did feel

reaction's force like Piſtol. Shall goodly phraſe be yclept uncouth, and ſhall it bandied be like baſe Æolian bladder? Why then come Rowen's Chalice——though bitter be the draught, I will avenge or die.

Thine ANTIENT PISTOL.

FALSTAFF TO ANTIENT PISTOL.

My good Antient, I do condole with thee.—The King hath no more reſpect unto an embaſſy, than the fox hath unto the ſex of the gooſe.——I am in myſelf greater than a Prince, yea, in my perſonal right; and he doth make me out of myſelf leſs than a peaſant, marry, to my perſonal wrong. There be more Deys in the court, than there be ſeconds in the day——I ſhould have diſplayed my preſents, and then would'ſt thou have had preſent audience.—That Hal is become a very Ottoman—but be no thou diſcomfited——We muſt rally, we muſt

muſt rally, lads——We have been twice trodden down in open attack, and now to the ſap-work.——The King doth love veniſon—We will to Maſter Shallow's in Glouceſterſhire—he hath a deep Deer-feld—'tis a county of a clamorous rut——We did borrow his monies by day; but we muſt make bold with his bucks by night——They have horns, good mine Antient, they have horns——'tis dangerous to meddle with Cuckoldom by day.

I grieve thou wert ſo ſorely dealt with at the Court——I have ſalves for a bruiſe, an thou doſt need them—ſalves, which I did apply to mine own diſcolourments.——Thou knoweſt I was trodden down like ſugars for an export——yea, I was made a convenience——I was ſhap'd into a Promontory, which ſpectators of a ſubaltern height did flock to for a ſight of paſſing Majeſty—they did aſcend and courſe o'er my belly like piſmires, ants on a mole-hill, ſave that the compreſſion was greater.——But 'twas

ever the nature of Man to trample on fallen greatneſs—'tis no marvel.

Let Nym be adviſed of our expedition—Corporal Bardolph and myſelf will ſpeedily quit Eaſtcheap, and rendezvous on the outſkirts of Windſor—We will line our ſhambles with veniſon, and then, my lads, to Windſor again——Hal ſhall yet be our own.

JOHN FALSTAFF.

CORPORAL NYM TO SIR JOHN.

I WILL no more with Piſtol rob—I do revolt——My fiſt is ſtruck, and that's the humour on't——his phraſes are known on the road. Veniſon hath mickle ſweets—and ſweets are luſcious things, and luſcious things do fit the maw of Nym; but thieves do hang, and their accomplices; and Nym would

would hang alone——Doth the humour paſs? The Antient is abſtruſe—he robs not at a word——Travellers ken not his phraſe, and parley is not good on the road; and that's the humour on't.——I do revolt, but mutiny is quell'd with grants; let Piſtol utter couthly, and then come fellowſhip again——When ſpeech will not bewray, then Glouceſterſhire's the word——But, *pauca*, Nym's a man of few——Sir John, I touch my brow—my fiſt is flat.

NYM.

FALSTAFF TO ANTIENT PISTOL.

WHAT at ſpurs, good mine Antient? and an adventure afoot too! By my troth, I'll no cock-fighting—Pullets, pullets, are your only encounter. We that do aſſail are cannibals, indeed; but Miſtreſs Partlet is frequent in her travail, and ſo ſociety ſhall not lack ſperm.

I pr'ythee let Corporal 'Nym have his humour: 'thou art a ſhrewd linguiſt—— thou haſt ever a throng of goodly quips and conceits; yea, more at thy tongue's beck, than he that doth refine from his brain with the help of the Still, Time: but they are crude, they are crude, mine Antient—they do lack droſſing—they are like to an unwrought commodity, which the handicraftſman cannot utter, until it is ſhap'd to the purpoſes of the conſumer.

Here is Bardolph doth proteſt, 'twas thou who did'ſt ſlight him from foot to foot throughout the croud at the Inſtallation: thou had'ſt robbed with him in the purlieus of the town, and the knaves did recogniſe thy quaintneſs of phraſe; thy Shibboleth, Antient, thy Shibboleth.——Oh! 'tis moſt damn'd to be mark'd like a tupp'd ewe.—— A ſlenderneſs of heel was indeed friendly to thy own retreat; but the Corporal, Heaven protect his parts! was compell'd to borrow expedition, marry, without pledge,

and

and retire into himſelf like a hedgehog, that ſo he might travel with the better eaſe on the toes of the town—Ha! ha! ha! O'my conſcience, I marvel he blaz'd not like the Phœnix—he had fire and faggot on his ſide—his noſe for a kindle, and his carcaſe for a fuel; and both in cloſe league.

I entreat thee, mine Antient, to lay aſide, yea, altogether reform theſe fierce ſallies of thy tongue, and rob as a Gentleman ſhould do; by the maſs, thou wilt hang us all——thou wilt do it, mine Antient, thou wilt do it. Remembereſt thou not, how the lunatick Biſhop did rate me to the Prince? An he had ever taken my good name in vain, but for thy incontinent flow of gall, then am I the groſſeſt thief afoot. —Marry, I am not the moſt ſpare, for indeed I do empty me all puries, yea be their bottoms as deep as Hell; but I do mean in my perſon, my reins, where there is leſs ſpecifick fat than is requiſite to the peopling of a dozen wicks——Sack, ſpirit of burnt

ſack,

ſack, doth make the belly gaſconade and ſwell.

I did purpoſe being at the rendezvous ere now; but I muſt tarry here a ſeaſon longer; do not thou and Nym break out again—I pr'ythee yield to him, mine Antient—It were a foul thing we ſhould ſledge, and upon 'peachment too!

Farewell!

ANTIENT PISTOL TO SIR JOHN.

SHALL paucity of phraſe and impotence alſo,
Curb Manhood with the rein?
And ſhall it chew the bit?
Shall Mutes and Aſian dogs controul the tongue;
And ſhall not Man ſpeak free?
Why then Avernus roar!

Then

Then Rhadamanth' his yawning floodgates ope,
And *Rowen' brim her Chalice!
Why then let icy death ſeize all,
Yea, upward from the foot unto the lungs,
And then the heart, perdy!

The Nym's a pauper vile—I do retort—he hath not utterance to woo his dog to bite at badger—I do retort—his reſt is eadem, the *ſemper* eadem—he cannot cull—his ſenſes are moſt barren——Ah! beeve-mouth'd bleating Nym! Ah! bull-calf old! I have and I will hold the priſtine tones of Man——The Nym doth iterate, doth bay the echo with his "humour on't." —And ſhall he model be? Then Piſtol, bow thy knee no more to Dagon—Sir John,

* The Editor moſt reſpectfully appeals to Mr. Malone for the ſenſe of this word ſo frequently in the Antient's mouth—Having in vain ranſacked *Chaucer, Ben Jonſon, Beaumont* and *Fletcher, Middleton* and *Rowley*, &c. &c. &c. he is at length compelled to print it *literatim* from the MS. for the comments of more learned men than himſelf.

thy

thy Philiſtine doth flee—Avaunt the flux of fellowſhip, and *ſolus* be the word!

DEPOSITION TAKEN BEFORE MASTER ROBERT SHALLOW, AND MASTER SLENDER, AT WINDSOR.

SHALLOW.

Now, good man, what is your buſineſs? what is the matter that you would deſire to diſcloſe?—Marry, I am of the Commiſſion in the county of Glouceſter; but if you have any thing to depoſe, that is ſalutary, and beneficial, and for the welfare and good of his moſt gracious Majeſty, I care not:—Robert Shallow, Eſquire, will take cognizance of it, though in the county of Berks.

Fellow. May it pleaſe your Worſhip, I'ſe a goatherd; and I'ſe a great matter to break.——Marry, your Worſhip, marry, when his Majeſty's life's in danger from a Caitiff-

Caitiff-monſter, an't it the duty of every honeſt ſubject to ſtand up and defend? An't that law? I would know that of your Worſhip.

Shallow. 'Tis among the Statutes.—'Tis the duty of every tall fellow, or he's liable to be 'peach'd upon the act as an abettor.—Proceed, good man—'tis juſt, very juſt—marry, proceed.——Truſt me, a comprehenſive fellow, Couſin Abram.—Marry, proceed.

Fellow. Being on the return yeſternoon to dinner—'twas juſt about twelve o'clock, for us poor folk, your Worſhip, are hungry before your great-oneyers—as I was coming home, I ſay, to dinner, for tho' I am but a ſimple lodger, mine hoſt Thacker pays Scot and Lot like a good ſubject.—Does your Worſhip know him? A' ſells trotters and Jews'-harps, oppoſite Gil. Sneke, the weaver's———

Slender.

Slender. 'Tis a ſmall ſhot from Ann Page's, Couſin Shallow—Is't not, good youth?

Fellow. No, your Worſhip—It's hard upon where———

Shallow. Aye, 'tis no matter, 'tis no matter.—Marry, go on—briefly, good man.

Fellow. As I was ſaying, walking mainly on, thinking, God wot, what a mite a groat and a half a day is for ſeven ſouls!—For there's my wife Nel, and Martin, and Nich, and Jerome, and Dorcas, and Ruth—it's a wounded many teeth, and a teaſter-worth o' corn will hardly ſet them all grinding; and your Worſhip knows, that quinces are very windy and griping to the belly—Body o'me, I thought our Jerome would ha' been ſcoured———

Shallow. Stand away further, fellow.—By the maſs, a foul varlet.—You ſmell, fellow—get ye gone.

Fellow.

Slender. Truly, Couſin——

Shallow. O'my conſcience, 'tis the arranteſt——Foh! get ye gone, knave; get ye gone ——

Slender. Truly Couſin, our Glouceſterſhire quince doth not reek thus—Indeed, la, you do him wrong.——Have you no pippins for your children, good youth? My Couſin could never away with a quince. —Your county hath good pears, too.

Fellow. I han't a ſingle one, your Worſhip; not an atomy of any thing, only one quince-tree, as loneſomely as any yew.—As I was ſaying, our Jerome———

Shallow. Tell me not of your Jeromes and your Chryſoſtoms—be not ſo windy—be brief—Marry, to the point———

Fellow. I humbly beſeech your Worſhip's pardon.——As I was ſaying, walking mainly on—'twas juſt in the nick, where our

our Dorcas goes to bleach in Datchet.—Does your Worſhip know the place?—What does I hear, but a great roaring an it had been any large bull a neighing; not a *horſe*, your Worſhip—and the river bulg'd up and ſwell'd like any———I humbly beſeech your Worſhip that our Nel have a penſion———

Shallow. Penſion! Why a penſion, marry? 'Ods liggens! Know you what you aſk, knave? Marry, why a penſion?

Fellow. Truly, your Worſhip, 'twould be very hard that my family ſhould live upon all quinces for a diſeaſe of mine caught in the King's affairs—Truly, your Worſhip, 'twould be very hard; for the water roll'd and wetted me, and I trembled, and trembled——I'm ſure, an' pleaſe your Worſhip, I've an ague.

Shallow. O' my conſcience, Couſin Abram, but the man is a lunatick, or a mountebank, or ſomething as bad——O' my

my conſcience, I believe a mountebank; for indeed he moves from place to place, and varies his points very knaviſhly.—— Look you, friend—there is only one alternative ſhall ſerve; marry, chuſe; and do it deliberately, and diſcreetly, and ſoberly—Either depoſe in a reſpectful manner, marry, without idle prabble about penſions, and quinces, and bulls; either utter with a proper and decent carriage and demeanour, or elſe walk ſedately out into the court-yard, and pull off your doublet, and your ſhirt, and your coat.—An a ſhrewd flogging don't bring him about——

Fellow. Oh! good your Worſhip, I've almoſt done——When the water ſwell'd, and ſwell'd, I perceived about a hundred paces a-head, a large creature riſe up, mainly big, your Worſhip, about the belly, and it came ſlowly to the bank, an if it would land; and juſt then it roll'd over, and over, and over, of all the world like a huge tub, and then it ſo beat about and roar'd

roar'd in the throttle!—An your Worſhip will give me leave, I'll try to——

Shallow. Marry, go on—proceed circumſtantially—go on—what ſaw you more? —Depoſe briefly.

Fellow. When a' had floundered, and flounc'd about ſome five minutes under water, a' got on the land, and ſtood on it's legs, and drew a great dagger and lifted in the air, and ſo ſhook it's weapon at the Caſtle, and roar'd! Good, your Worſhip, I'm certain it hath a foul deſign againſt the King's life—that I'll be ſworn of upon the book.

Slender. I proteſt, Couſin, the——

Shallow. In the name of his Majeſty's ſacred perſon, I command and bind you to anſwer all interrogatories afore the Council.—Here is a great conſpiracy come to light.

Slender.

Slender. Truly, Couſin, I——

Shallow. Marry, it had the gait of a warrior—I would mean, it ſhewed a tall perſonable figure, did it not? Betook it to the water again? And for it's complexion — marry, you obſerv'd it's countenance?

Fellow. An your Worſhip means the hue of it's ſkin, truly it had a doublet and hoſe on :—but the face was all the world of a colour with the bubucle at the left of your Worſhip's noſe.

Slender. By yea and no, Coz——

Shallow. 'Tis the Welchman *Glendower, by my hopes of ſalvation through the

* Shrewdly conceived, and profoundly, by Maſter Robert Shallow. For a man, of whom Holingſhed and other writers relate ſuch wonders, to travel a ſcore or two leagues Fiſh-faſhion, were the moſt eaſy and conſiſtent thing in the world. Take water at Radnor,

the pious and holy Virgin Mary!—The Privy Council muſt know it.—Here is a great Conſpiracy—I'll to the Council.

Fellow. Marry, your Worſhip, ſure a' was not a Salamander!—The water ſmoak'd and ſmoak'd, that, body o'me! you might ha' poach'd an egg!

Shallow. 'Tis Owen the Welchman, a very doughty Rebel—Fellow, be in readineſs—You muſt depoſe at the Council—By the Maſs, a great Traitor.—Be at hand.

Fellow. I humbly beſeech your Worſhip, that our Nel——

Shallow. Aye, aye—be in readineſs—She ſhall be look'd to.

Radnor, paſs Brecknock and Monmouthſhires, land and cut acroſs the country; wet his fins again at Cirenceſter, by Oxford, Wallingford, &c. &c. bait at Marlow, and thus to Datchet.

ANTIENT

ANTIENT PISTOL AND CORPORAL NYM
TO SIR JOHN.

PISTOL, lament—Sir Nym, the Willow be,
And hang o'er Datchet's ſide;
For chivalry is in, and unto Charon damn'd
Muſt, crouching, tender coin.
Piſtol hath wrongs; but Piſtol eke hath pouch.
Sir Nym hath humours borne; but Nym will pocket too.
Why then caſt Rancour forth, yea into utter night,
And let it gnaſh the tooth.
Sir John, ariſe——thy knighthood is defam'd——
At thee the Shallow aſs and Slender foal do bray.
Thou art the mark of Archery become
To Council wags——Oh! damned Glouceſter beaſts,
That will not wince, when hinds do ride and ſpur!

We do incloſe what goatherd hath depos'd.
The quip's afoot, and quips do amble faſt.
Ariſe, Sir Knight, or Pæans will enſue;
Yea, from the mouth of ballad-teeming harridans.
Piſtol* hath wrongs; but he doth caution thee,
The River and the Ford alſo to flee.
Nym will have right ere he doth ſay, *avoid*—
But Scylla's deep, and that's the humour on't.

ANTIENT PISTOL.
CORPORAL NYM.

MRS. FORD TO SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

AH! dear Sir John! I tremble to think what you have ſuffered.—Tell me, has the

* It ſhould be obſerved, that Sir John had diſcarded Nym and Piſtol for refuſing to become his emiſſaries in the deſign on Ford's wife.—See Merry Wives of Windſor, Act I. Scene 3.

wittolly

wittolly wretch diſcoloured your poor ſtomach? But, alas! I'm too certain of it—I felt it all, every blow;—no wonder he put you into ſuch a territ and fright—Mercy on me, how ſhrewdly he handled his weapon!

Well, I always will ſay the ſtars were of a mouſe-colour when you were born.—Think, if you had been let into the Thames directly upon this exerciſe—— Indeed, la', I won't call it *beating*—all melting with heat—for, indeed, Sir John, I never beheld you run ſo nimbly — bruis'd, and frighted, as you were! Mercy on me, 'twould have been your death, quite a forfeit!——Yes; your ſtars are certainly of a mouſe-colour; — they are neither black nor white———

Ah! dear Sir John! you little know the —— —— but let the end ſpeak.—Well; to think of the tears that your miſchances have coſt me! Heigho!

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Beſhrew my weak head, but I dreamt all laſt night of horns.——Oh! I beheld a great calf faſtened to a ſtake, and he was baited, of all things in the world, by ſuch a ſweet portly boar-pig, ſo plump and ſo ſweet! And he was ſo gored and toſſed as often as ever he came into the ring, (indeed, Sir John, it's ominous—you ſhan't enter my houſe again) that it quite ſunk my heart within me.—La', and it was ſo whimſical! for in capered a pretty youngiſh Gentleman, and he danced and played upon his Kit round and round the Calf, till he ſtood quite dumfound; and preſently there ſhot out of his head large Horns, and ſoon they grew larger, and larger, and larger, and ſpread, and ſpread, till they looked of all the world like Herne's Oak; and we all danced about him ſo merry, that it was quite whimſical.—La', Sir John, you ſhall meet me at the Oak, and we'll have a revethere, and I'll directly ſend Dr. Caius to cure your poor bruiſes—I will be humoured in this—a poor weak woman, that hazards her reputation for your ſake, and not to be pleaſed

in

in ſuch a trifle! Indeed, now, I will not be refuſed.—Dr. Caius ſhall immediately come to cure your knocks and bruiſes, and then it will be ſo pure to dance at midnight round the Oak! La' now, indeed, it will. In this I reſt,

Your loving,

ALICE FORD.

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF TO MRS. FORD.

I'LL caper —— I'll dance with thee, ——Any thing, any thing, my Queen of Sheba, but no Doctor Caius.—Indeed my hurts are not of that extent—No—I have a ſurgeon of my own employ too—No, I'll not ſee him. Can I live to hear it bandied from mouth to mouth, that the Knight Falſtaff, he who hath nightly taken his repoſe under the ach of more ſoldier like bruiſes than the ſpirit of the holy Stephen fled upon, that *he* hath foregone his days of hardihood, and commenced Glyſter

in the hands of a dole-dealing Eſculapian —Name it not: rather hang me by the gills on Miſtreſs Keech's ſtilliards, and mete me out by halfp'worths to the pariſh poor. ——No; I'll no Caius. What, I'm to meet thee at Herne's Oak? —— Well, I'll be a Nimrod—I'll perſonate any thing to encounter my fair Camilla; any thing, ſave an Eunuch and a Wode-woman.—I would, Miſtreſs Ford, I might have dealt him a fillip on the crown.—I have one bruiſe larger than a porter's ſhoulder-knot—'tis on my cheek, I cannot ſit, ny nether cheek; for, indeed, I lack'd the habiliments of a woman—I was ſparely coated.—— But I had determined to forget this—Yea, I'll forget it—'tis laudable in Man to be paſſive.

Shall I order my horſes? 'Twere beſt be fleet, ſhould the knave find us again.—There is a pond at hand, and I would be loth to reign over a ſubaltern province: no—an I am born to be deified, an I muſt needs be a God of the Waters, let me be immerſed

on

on the point of a Whaler's Harpoon—Give me to preſide in Greenland, my natal ſoil.—Ha! ha! ha!

Thou ſeeſt, Miſtreſs Ford, I am incontinently given to merriment, in deſpite of the fiery ordeals my fleſh and blood have undergone.—But I love thee, I love thee, and there is much endurance in affection.

Let me have advice of thy appointments with Herne——I will attend thee with the preciſion of the dial, the dial of the night, which is Miſtreſs Luna, the moon, unto his Oak ——

And there we'll wanton caper on the plain,
And weave for Herne a horn to wind again.

Farewell, fair Miſtreſs Ford;—and remember, I'll no Leech Caius applied to me*.

* Dr. Caius had been preſent at the beating of Falſtaff when diſguiſed as the Maid's Aunt of Brentford.—This accounts for his frequent cautions to Mrs. Ford.——He dreads a diſcovery.

FALSTAFF TO BROOK.

COULD a gentleman foreſee the many croſſes, the many miſhaps, that await him that ſimply treadeth within the ſphere of a woman's habitation, (I ſpeak not of groſs corporeal touch) he would uſe after-luſtration, as liberally as the pallid wretch, who had eſcaped him from the ravages of a peſtilential Calenture.—There is a noiſome ranknefs, to me more hateful than the *Cleymes of unſlacken lime, that imperceptibly ſteals upon the whole man, who holds but even converſe with a woman. If the Box of Pandora was other than a combination of villainous qualities in one damn'd houſewife, then am I a very box to contain the freedom of every man's reproach in.

* Cleymes were artificial ſores raised by the application of unſlacked lime on the legs of paupers, &c. for the purpoſe of exciting compaſſion in paſſengers.

I in-

I informed thee, Maſter Brook, of my ſkilful advances, of my ſeeming ſucceſſes. —I likewiſe unfolded to thee of my miſhaps, of the depth of the Datchet, and other localities.—I blended them, Maſter Brook, in order to preſerve an equilibrium; leſt the Avoirdupois of my ſucceſſes might appear without droſs, and ſo thou be led to build on an uncertain tenure.—I told thee too, how I became proxy for one Miſtreſs Pratt, and in her behoof was compelled to gather up nimbly my chitterlings, my reins, and eſcape from the diſcipline of the knave Ford.—Prepend further—my molten frame being a little conſolidated, a moſt ſoothing letter, tender withal, full of condolences, comes from Miſtreſs Ford.—She aſſureth me, ſhe felt every blow I received.—— Maſter Brook, believe her not—the force of ſympathy is faint, to the force centered in Ford's hand.—She lies in her throat.— The knave laid me out in ſuch natural colours, I have every ſhade pertaining to the Herald's art in my body.— I cannot extract, or I ſhould make money.—To

love compulſatorily is not in the nature of Man.—I can be beat into a mummy, but not into love; but I'll woo for thee:—Expect her, Maſter Brook, expect her ſtill.—I ſhall meet her at Herne's Oak—Call upon me, bring money—thou ſhalt hear more.

JOHN FALSTAFF.

FALSTAFF TO BROOK.

MASTER Brook, there is a point, which I did in ſome ſort forget to touch upon—I will tell you; but, indeed, Maſter Brook, 'tis a ſubtle point, and I muſt handle it diſcreetly—for tho' it is not the Needle's point, Maſter Brook, yet may it goad; yea, and hath variations, and doth lay in a ſmall compaſs.

I will tell you, Maſter Brook, and briefly, but you muſt be ſecret—I muſt play the light

light heel, flit to and fro like a ſhadow, to ſwift nimble tunes—Miſtreſs Ford will have it ſo—I muſt dance, caper in the air like a tun of Molaſs'; only my aſcenſion will be heavier, in regard I muſt riſe without a crane, Maſter Brook.—I did never practiſe the art as a Yonker, and now muſt I take to it as an old Man:—but 'tis for your ſake, 'tis for your ſake, Maſter Brook.—For mine own part, I had as lief ſwell out a Weaver's doublet, and compaſs my belly from the navel round with a dozen wiſps of hemp, and manufacture, twiſt rope by the length.—I am not faſhioned for the end of a *pipe—I had as lief, for mine own part, bind myſelf to the common hangman, Maſter Brook, and ſupply the gibbet with ropes, yea, at a foul ſhirt per felon, Maſter Brook; for I am not fond of liquoring the ground—I was never a dancer, Maſter Brook—it is not my art—my ſoles do ſomehow cleave to the ground—I could never

* Does Sir John mean as a pea, blown by the breath of ſchool-boy?

weigh them up twain at a caper, ſave when I did perſonate Miſtreſs Pratt; for as a witch, Maſter Brook, I can vault like a roebuck—but then I muſt ſtep out of myſelf.—I do remember, the Welch Prieſt did proteſt 'twas bread and cheeſe to him—he might have added butter, Maſter Brook—I lacked but Miſtreſs Paget's churn to be ſhaped into pounds.——But I do err from my ſubject.—In few, Maſter Brook, Ford's wife will have me dance at the Oak, and you muſt commend me to a minſtrel-founder—the flitting knave muſt tutor me, that ſo I appear not a ſtranger to the art—I muſt be converſant—for women, Maſter Brook, are won by the throng of good parts—the ſimple diſplay of countenance hath no more purchaſe, than is in the ſhell of a boil'd Lobſter—I do know it, I do know it, Maſter Brook.—I muſt write unto town for apparel; for the Thames hath ſomehow an antipathy to a good ſuit—I do ſmack of the Haddock. Do thou on thy part allow not the furlough to a moment; but haſte, Maſter Brook.

JOHN FALSTAFF.

MISTRESS

MISTRESS QUICKLY TO SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

MERCY on me! Fall! I tell you what, Sir John—Dorothy muſt fall with it—I muſt have her warn'd to quit, and you muſt take to her, Sir John, and put ſome ſhifts to her back, you muſt.—An honeſt trifling gain of five-pence odd in the quart, and to be ſnatch'd from a poor Widow, as one might ſay, without an atomy of reaſon! Sir John, you muſt take to her—you muſt ſpend upon her body—a fine ſhewy creature, goodſooth, with ſilk gowns and kirtles for the first Lady in the land, and not a modeſt change next her ſkin! Fie, Sir John! you ought to fit her, Sir John.—You know her nakedneſs—I have bought for her, and bought for her, and ſhe hath pawn'd, and pawn'd, that 'tis quite a ſhame to think on—and I'm ſure the gains of a poor hoſteſs in drinkings won't pay for it. Sir John, I'll tell you what, Sir John—Here's been a great to do in my houſe, and all

all about you, Sir John—I ſhall be ruin'd and fracted—I muſt break—My Cuſtomers tell me you are gone, and I muſt charge ſack a matter cheaper, and there's no ſcarcity now you are away.—Here's Maſter Martlet, that you call'd the Eves-dropper, 'cauſe, goodſooth, he had a bird's name—'twas no longer ago than yeſterday,—ſays he, Goodwife Quickly,—*Goodwife,* Sir John—for he always names me ſo, altho' he knew my poor huſband that's dead; and I tell him ſo, and then he ſays, I am your *Lemon—and, indeed, Sir John, it's true enough; for you have ſqueez'd me, and ſqueez'd me, till I have not a bit of four left—yea, I am too humourſome to you, and you know it.—Well, as I was ſaying, there was Maſter Martlet—ſays he, Goodwife Quickly, who breeds, who lays your eggs? Alice Pleneſperm, quoth I, and I take twelve dozen of a week when good Sir John's here, and ſix dozen when he

* *Lemman*, or Miſtreſs, I rather ſuppoſe to have been Maſter Martlet's meaning.

'journs.

'journs. Then, ſays he, you muſt take half the price of ſack away too, for the Knight's not here now to make a ſcarce—And with that, they all in a throng perteſted I muſt 'bate and come down, or my houſe would not hold it's own—And, indeed, Sir John, it's grown quite a deſert—only there are no beaſts to be ſure.—You are far away, and Bardolph, and Piſtol, and there's no ſport toward, as there was wont to be, and I'm oblig'd to lower to keep open houſe.

I beſeech you, good Sir John, ſweet Sir John, to come back quick, that I may bring the liquors to a good creditable head again, and not let them dwindle, and dwindle, that every flea-bitten raſcal may perfume his blood like a gentleman, forſooth! I pray you now, Sir John, and don't let 'em ride an honeſt body—Here's Dorothy and myſelf—we have both been rode, Sir John, that it were a ſhame to mention how, ſince you have been at Windſor—And don't let the Boar fall away, Sir John.—There's

Maſter

Maſter Rahab, that loved Dol, thereby bringing you into Canaries, and Neighbour Dumb our miniſter, that uſed to come diſguiſed in the green doublet, and Mr. 'Tolemy the Harlotry Player, they have all forſook Eaſtcheap, and gone into the ſuburbs, that we are quite, as one might ſay, no better than lone Penitents, and people of no character. Dol ſends her ſervice, and holds her own marvellouſly——I beſeech you, good Sir John, to delay no longer than need.

MISTRESS QUICKLY TO SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

A WHOLE ſuit in ſattin! Twelve and twelve's twenty-four—that's ſeven pound four—and ſix is thirty——Sir John, I won't do it—You think I'm ſpun of ſattin; yea, a worm, goodſooth! But you ſhall ſee, Sir John, that I won't be trod on, as I have been—I won't credit it, Sir John—You had

had a whole top-to-bottom ſuit at my charge no longer ago than two days before you 'journed—'twas the ſame day that you had ſuch a kind letter from the King—and you can't have worn them a pin's point. You want to give it to women, Sir John, and I won't countenance ſuch vileneſs. Here's one Miſtreſs Urſula calls here about you, and you ought to be 'ſham'd to leave Dol in the manner you have. I have tended you myſelf late and early, and waſh'd your fleſh before and behind, and help'd you to bed—Yes, Sir John, when you could not help yourſelf, that you'd have died of being ſenſeleſs and dead of liquor——I've put ſalt on your belly o'nights, or you'd have burſt—pounds and pounds of ſalt, when you were ſwell'd, that I never got the tythe of a dram for; that nobody, not my own ſervants, would touch, Sir John. 'Twas but at Allhallowmas that I lent you money, thirteen pound odd that you won at Primero and was not paid——You promis'd I ſhould have it on the morrow; but you did not ſay what morrow, and I wonder how you ſhould, goodſooth, when

when my own ſervants know you never won a groat of it.

Come and diſcharge a poor Hoſteſs's dues, Sir John, like an honeſt man, do—and don't give kirtles away and never pay for them.——Here's Mr. Dombledon had well nigh got Dol's body for a kirtle you gave her with your own hands—I can witneſs it, and the poor young creature has been compell'd to part with her ear-rings and bracelets to prevent an arreſt.——It's a ſhame, Sir John, and you need not ſend any more for ſattin to me, Sir John, for I won't part with another yard's-worth to you again, while my name's Quickly; and ſo you may get it where you can, Sir John.

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF TO MISTRESS URSULA.

No, no, no—thou art miſadviſed—thou doſt ſuffer Baker's wives, and barren Goſſips, who do conceive upon the novelties of a ſtale world, get the rule over thee.—The King doth counſel with me in the chewing of a Spaniſh Nut—He knoweth not the height of ſix foot himſelf—I do prick his very yeomen for him—Even now hath there been with me a certain Welch Prieſt in theſe parts, who would have acceſs unto the Court—Why he doth preſent me with a ſilver toaſter, as a bribe, a prologue to his induction—Take it—I do give it thee—'Tis nothing in reſpect of what thou ſhalt poſſeſs. Thou art one of the firſt Ladies in the land, an thou wert but ſenſible of it. If 'twere as thou ſay'ſt, that the King doth neglect me, and like the wicked Rehoboam hath taken unto young Counſel-

Counſellors, why ſhould I tarry at Windſor? Let that ſuffice thee.

Thirty yards of Fuſtian! I may not hear of it.——Shall it be ſaid, that Sir John Falſtaff doth take his ſeat among the Nobles of the land in the veſt of an unbelieving Rabbi? It may not be.—Why, I muſt do the King honour.—Sattin, *ſattin*, is your only Courtier's wear. Come, come —'tis only a pretty provoking humour thou haſt of giving the luſtre to thy favours.—Let it be four and twenty yards then—Keep the remnant for new ruffs, and adorn thee for thy advancement.——Why, there it is now—I have ſimply more ductility than the nimbleſt quickſilver, and leſs oppoſition than a drove gooſe—I am tractable to anything, and thou ſeeſt it—any thing, that may add to the excellent favour of thy countenance—I have not controul of mine own will—thou haſt uſed ſpells with me—but thou know'ſt this, thou know'ſt this—I have told thee ſo before.

Let

Let it be a quarter* yard wider than I did at firſt ſpeak of.—Let me have it ſpeedily, for I may not appear at Court—and indite direct letters unto me of thy deſires—Chuſe thy own dignity—look out for thyſelf—be prodigal, be prodigal—all is in my gift.—— Thou may'ſt become the Goddeſs Dian' an thou wilt, and lead the chace—— Thou wilt look well with a quiver—for I do mean to preſerve the Rangerſhip. No more ſcruples, but be quick in my affairs, and ſo ſhalt thou be procureſs of thine own greatneſs.

Adieu!

JOHN FALSTAFF.

* Sir John is determimed not to loſe by his boaſted acquieſcence.

MASTER

MASTER SLENDER TO ANN PAGE.

FAIR Miſtreſs Ann, ſweet Miſtreſs Ann, Abraham Slender craveth leave and liberty to ſalute thy white hand—He doth by theſe commend his worthleſſneſs unto thy grace and favour. He would be thy ſlave, thy ſervant, to the height and extremity of all vow'd ſervice; to wit, thy ſuitor and thy wooer. Yet not ſo much of his own free motion, indeed la', as becauſe his friends deſire it of him—that is to ſay, his friends will, that thus matters ſhould ſtand. There is the learned Doctor Sir Hugh Evans, and the wife and Worſhipful Juſtice Shallow, my good friend and relation, ſtand by me in this matter. I will briefly recount what words were uttered in my hearing no longer ago than Thurſday was a fortnight—I do remember it was after a Chriſtening, at which the aforeſaid Welch Divine adminiſtered the Rites, the Ceremonies, as are indeed appointed by the Church in ſuch

ſuch caſes, as your fair ſelf cannot but know. It is to be found in the Rubric, and it followeth the Communion-ſervice, and it is indeed a goodly ordinance, as is well known to you, fair Miſtreſs Ann. As I was ſaying, I chanced to obſerve upon the ſober and decent demeanour, with which our learned Paſtor went through the ſervice; as indeed the whole was notably well performed, ſaving that he had not the gift of the Engliſh ſpeech ſo glib as one might deſire (our Glouceſterſhire Divines have the beſt ſmack of it of any I know). This did I remark, and the Goſſips did ſo titter and laugh, and whiſper, that indeed, la', I was quite put to confuſion; and then Miſtreſs *Quickly tapped me on the cheek, and ſought of me, fair Ann, if ſhe ſhould ſtand Godmother to my firſt child; and whiſpered in my ear (loud enough, forſooth, for all the company to hear) that it was rumoured all over Windſor, that there was ſpeedily to be a match between me and Miſ-

* This is not Mrs. Q. of Eaſtcheap.

treſs

treſs Ann Page——And I bowed, and ſtammered, and rejoined, that it was a promiſe above my hopes—and then the Goſſips fell to tittering and whiſpering incontinently, that indeed la', I was quite abaſh'd.

Fair Miſtreſs Ann, it is not the faſhion of Abram Slender to diſparage any. There be ſome among thy ſuitors, that have very good gifts and graces. Imprimis, or firſt of all, Mr. Fenton.—He hath a good leg and an indifferent breaſt, and is indeed a youth of good conditions — He danceth, ſingeth ſongs without book, and hath ſtore of riddles and good nights, and is, in ſooth, a very dog at fence—but he hath ſeen wild days, Miſtreſs Ann, and wild nights—he hath comforted with the looſe, the idle, and the graceleſs—he hath kept more waffels, and ſpent more monies upon riotings and chamberings, I think on my conſcience, than the mad merry fat knight himſelf. I will not ſay much of myſelf—it is not my way—but the learned Sir Hugh, and the wife Juſtice Shallow, who is alſo my couſin

(by

(by my mother's ſide—ſhe came of the Shallows of Glouceſterſhire, and ſpelt her name with an *e*, *Shallowe*) theſe can vouch for me, that I am not given to drinkings, and expences, and waſting my patrimony —Folks did uſe to commend me therefore. I was call'd in mine own country, "Staid "Abram," ſometimes "Sober Abram;" good commendations, as times go—good commendations, if rightly taken, fair Miſtreſs Ann. I ſay again, I do not mean to diſparage any—neither again will I run compariſons with the French Leach Caius —he is ſuſpected, yea ſhrewdly, fair Ann, of a plot—he is diſaffected—ſhun him—he is thought to be a ſpy.—My Couſin Shallow hath alſo an eye upon him—I do repeat it, ſhun him.

For thy ſervant, it is not meet that he ſound his own praiſes—let his friends, who alſo put him upon this, anſwer for him. Thus much let me ſay, that I fall not ſhort of any of thy ſuitors in rare gifts of body, mind, and fortune—I am a very dog at ſtew'd

prunes*; and I have eſtates, and beeves, and a goodly manſion in Glouceſterſhire, when I come of age (nine months and odd days only, I do lack of coming to years of diſcretion) and I will ſettle upon thee, and thy heirs lawfully begotten, five hundred mark a year, if the thing might be brought to bear—I would it might, fair Miſtreſs Ann! for folks would think it ſin and ſhame, that the family of the Slenders ſhould periſh for lack of heirs. And I pray you, fair Ann, do not liſten to the tales of the ſlanderous. ——Jacob Perkins hath taken unto himſelf the ſhame and the ſin of the illegitimate baſe-born offspring laid to my charge, and the youth and the maiden are ſettled in a neighbouring Hamlet.

I do ſend with theſe my ſervant Simple, an honeſt knave, and of good wit.

Farewell, ſweet Ann!

* For an explanation of this phraſe, ſee Note in the 3d Scene of the 3d Act, firſt part of *Henry the 4th.*—Johnſon's Edit. of Shakſpere.

SIR

SIR HUGH EVANS TO ANN PAGE.

I DO peg and peſeech you, and I do make requeſts, moreover, and entreaties, look you, in the pehalf and pehoof of Maſter Apram Slender, in the goot town Windſor reſident, that you would peſtow your graces, and your ſmiles, and your favours, upon the poor youth.—He is a youth of coot gifts and promiſes, and it is the deſire of your Father, and withal of the ſage Juſtice Shallow, that you would look with an eye of pity and compaſſion upon him.—The caſe, look you, is a deſperate caſe—the poor youth's knaggin is primful of fancies, and melancholies, and deſpondencies; that it would make any Chriſtian heart pleed to ſee.—I do fear me his wits are going; his judgements and his memories, obſerve, which we are apt to denominate and call his wits, or his faculties;—they are both approved words and phraſes. He was 'ont be a youth of coot

parts, and of creat learning; and now hath he forgot his moods, and his tenſes, and his Quæ-Genus withal. He did never fail give the anſwers and the reponſes, which are ſet down in the Church Catechiſm, freely and with creat readineſs, and without pook, look you; and now hath he no judgement in theſe things.—O'my conſcience, he hath clean forgot his outward and his viſible ſigns and his craces, and is a fery Heathen in ſuch matters, which is a ſhame, and a ſin, and a creat pity, moreover.——The pig fat Knight put him down the other day, when he required of him who was the ſtrongeſt man?—"By'r Lady," quoth Apram, "I cannot tell." Thy memory is a thing of nought, rejoined the Knight. —Tell me, who lay in Dalila's lap, and had his poll claw'd, and lo! the enemy came upon him, and ſhaved him with a razor of Gath?—and ſo fell to mockings and vlout-ings; for he hath a foul uncodly tongue, and a fery Infidel wit, look you.——Py the Maſs, he will not ſpare Cot's pook when it doth come in his way.——Coot

Miſtreſs

Miſtreſs Ann, I do counſel and exhort you to uſe the poor young man tenderly, or he may pe triven to deſperations, and cholers, and lunacies—you have your 'viſaments o'this matter—look to it—he is a well-conditioned youth, and a pold; and one, moreover, that hath Quarter-ſtaff'd with a Warrener, and hath look'd a Packſword in the face upon occaſions, marry.

As I can learn, he hath not proke the matter to you, that is to ſay, verpally and py 'ord of mouth; but he hath written, he tells me; and I hope in a Gentlemanly phraſe, and that he hath offered coot offers and conditions, look you—for he cometh of gentle plood.——Coot Miſtreſs Ann, give the youth lifts and encouragements, for he is packward and ſhy in theſe matters, and may need it, look you.——Indeed, the youth is a youth of coot parts, and creat moteſty, and hath an indifferent ſkill in the languages, and may come to pe of the Quorum, obſerve; for his creat crandfather and father, and his crandfather old Simon

Slender, have peen all of the Quorum before him; and it is not meet nor fitting, look you, that there ſhould fail a man out of the Houſe of the Slenders to judgement the land.

Farewell, coot Miſtreſs Ann!

H. EVANS.

ANCIENT PISTOL TO MASTER ABRAM SLENDER.

LET Doves and Lambkins ſigh.—Muſt Piſtol verſes write?
Down, princely choler, down!—Shall Man of War turn pimp?
Then ballad-monging thrive — Piſtol will nought indite.—
Turn verſe to proſe for me—turn day to night——
And Chaos judge thy rhymes—for proſody ſhall rue,

Falſe

Falſe concords halt—pronoun and adverb limp—
For parts of ſpeech are none, when none can ſpeech impart.
Be Slender therefore mute, for ſlender is his wit.
The Fox ſhall cater for the ſilly Gooſe,
And lordly Lion eke for baſe Jackall,
E'er true love woo by proxy.
Couragio, Lads! Mecænas is the word—
Poets their patrons have, and Verſes do enſue.—
Why then let purſes gape, for Gratis is a Fool,
And golden wires make muſic.
Shall Phœbus thread-bare go, the Muſes nine alſo,
Thoſe dainty Imps on top of high Parnaſſe,
Shall they undowried weep? Then Spinſter be the word—
Wedlock is nought—Piſtol will ſingle live.
Piſtol Piſtoles doth love—like loveth like.
Let purſe-ſtrings crack—Nan Page is thine, ſweet boy.

She doth thee fly, but Cretan is her wing—
The wax doth melt, when Piſtol is the Sun,
And thou ſhalt ſeal, go to—contented be therefore ——
But let the labourer live, for he his wages earns.——
Piſtol Piſtoles doth lack, who lacketh nought of wit.
Nan Page is thine, and Fenton he ſhall flee;
Yea, be exhaled, like damned dog of dunghill;
For Piſtol he hath ſpoke by Rowen' and her Chalice.

Note.—Maſter Slender appears to have been tampering with Piſtol to write him ſome love-verſes for Ann Page.——How he could ſuſpect Mine Ancient of going to work without his accuſtomed implements, his *Aurum Durabile*, &c. I can only attribute to his very ſlight acquaintance with the Ancient.

COMBI-

COMBINATION OF THE WINDSOR INN-KEEPERS.

Sir Knight, thy Clarion——Blow, Bully Rock! Blow, Robin Muns, Peter Pimple, and Arthur Swipes! To him of the cumbrous Womb the Recheat! Sir Knight, we greet thee.—Thy Fiſt of Chivalry, moſt radiant Dad of Bacchus! From Herne's Oak unto Datchet Mead do our lintels ſwell to receive thee, moſt puiſſant Elve-queller!——Are our Huſbands pamper'd, do Brows inflame and itch? Ariſe, Sir Knight, ariſe and woo—Quick! Trot! Jog!—Into the baſket go, and dive into the deep—Deſcend, Miſtreſs Pratt, deſcend, and to the Foreſt ſpeed with Herne the Hunter's Horns—Purge wittolly Huſbandhood of it's humours, and let Houſewifery appear moſt chaſte.——Thou art the pumice-ſtone of Philoſophy in Windſor-quarry found:—our Dace and our Plaice, our Veniſon, and our Samſon, our nether

Socks, and our upper Shirts, our Wode-woman, and our Sack-maſter.——We have no Dragons, bully; we have no riddle-mongers to gobble up our unexpounders, no dainty Monſter to breakfaſt on our Virginity, or thou ſhould'ſt be our Harcles and our Champion too. Shall us loſe thee, Bully? Shall us lend thee Horſes? Thou art big, thou art fat, convex, rotund—— Thou wilt break their backs——Spavins and navel-galls do ſlacken paces.——Thou art rein-ſwoln, pot-bellied—Diſeaſes are catching, Knight—fracted wind is foul—Candy is not good with Horſe fleſh——Do we utter well, Bully? Speak we ſcholarly? We are confederate, join'd, Men of Compact—Thou ſhalt not ſtraddle our Nags—they bear not double, old Caſtor and Pollux. To the Common go—aſcend, Sir Galilean; mount, and to the City trot—We will ſtrew the way—we will climb palms—Will it do, Bully? The Aſs doth trample moſt Prieſtly—'twill be pompous, Greekiſh.

We

We the Caputs, and the Heads of the merry Order of Hoſthood in King Harry's Town Windſor reſident, do proteſt, that the Knight Falſtaff ſhall not have our, or any of our Horſes.—Doth he tender Coin for hire? He hath mickle weight—he's a Mineral, a Foſſil, a Mine of Lead—he will cruſh, overwhelm.—Do we ken his Angels, will he purchaſe? We have bowels, we have bowels—Naghood's Tongue doth utter not—it is ty'd—We will not ſell—we are leagu'd.

Sign, ſeal, deliver—Quick, Neighbours!

Signed,

BULLY ROCK.
ROBIN MUNS.
PETER PIMPLE.
ARTHUR SWIPES.

SIR JOHN TO ANTIENT PISTOL.

HASTE, my good Antient, I would ſee thee—Haſte to Miſtreſs Quickly's—I have miſuſed thee—I confeſs it, I confeſs it; but be thou the good Samaritan—I have need of oil to my wounds—I have been cozen'd, revil'd, and whipt—cozen'd by Woman, revil'd by Man, and whipt by Child.——I have been antler'd, my good Antient, though not wedded.——But I lie, I have been wedded too;—to a buck-baſket, to the hot fingers of fairy-elves, to the frail promiſes of woman.——Yea, I have had the Spinſter's ring—I was ſous'd into the Thames, and wrung by mine Hoſt's ſcullions; cramp'd 'twixt hand and hand like a rinc'd doublet.——I had thought my ſwoln belly were but a maſs of congealed ſack, beverag'd, indeed, with a ſlight ſmack of diſtillation from the poppies of the drowſy God; but I was out, villainouſly miſtaken—I had more bucket-water than ſack:

ſack: and for diſtillation, I'm a knave an there hath been a ſcruple of it in my whole ſyſtem for a matter of eight and forty hours.——There is no reſt in a cart—Mine Hoſt, and his fry of Inkeepers—all the lice of Egypt lye in their quarters!—did enter into confederacy to unhorſe me.——I broke their backs, forſooth! 'Tis a lie.——The diſciple Ananias leas'd not ſo largely—'tis a lie—But thou art at Windſor—thou muſt be adviſed of all this; for the ballad-ſinging knaves did deal out, circulate their proteſt—'twas a ſtanding jeſt—thou muſt know it.——I will briefly then unfold to thee, mine Antient, how I eſcaped me away. I had note of a commodity of hides being carted for London,—buckler's for Hal's, I would ſay the *King's* ſervice.——A curſe on Hal! Would he he were fellow-twin to the Giant, he with the vulture at his chitterlings!—— To Windſor went I for a reconciliation; from Windſor came I for a Tanner's yard!—— Mark me, good mine Antient:—Having note that there were hides going for London,

don, I barter'd with the Carter, brib'd the Boor to decamp at midnight without coil, for the town was mad, would ha' kept me for ſport, made a Sampſon of me, had I conforted with Ox-hides by day.—In I got, unknowing of other paſſengers—there were myriads—by night they did rooſt—on the morrow I was envelop'd, a lump of corruption! a very dunghill, with all it's ſuffocative ſmells!—The buck-baſket was a manſion to it, a Court—would I had been there again! I'd ſubmitted to be quoited into the river—I'd ſubmitted to be ſtirred like a boiled cabbage—yea, by the cowl-ſtaff.——I was fifty times in the mind to deſcend on the road, and truſt to dame Fortune for the reſt; but the rogue will'd it not—he had a jeſt in ſtore—for the goal I bargain'd, and for the goal I muſt on.—'Twas not in my ability to vault—'twas a precipice of five foot—I ſhould ha' burſt like a bladder, and with as much exploſion too, for I had faſted.——The town did come in view, and I was in a cart, drove like dung for a fallow; a man of my rank

and

and parts!—I was compell'd to creep between the horns of the teeming hides, and enſconce me beneath.—I was compell'd to forego the light of day, or would I have lived,- mine Antient, to be ſhotten, like a tale of bricks, from the nether end of a cart into a Tanner's yard? I'd rather roll'd and been daſh'd—I'd rather have lain till the day of reſurrection in the paunches of fallow hounds.——Had I been diminutive, I muſt have into the pit—but I o'erſhadow'd it—the tan-pit, for the foul favour'd whipſhot had made it his mark.

Haſte, good mine Antient, I have more to tell thee.——Mine Hoſteſs did think I had riſen from the dead—Would I had not been ſo much among the living!—But indeed I was much corrupted.——Let me ſee thee—Delay not.——

JOHN FALSTAFF.

SIR

SIR JOHN TO CORPORAL *BARDOLPH.

WHY, thou damn'd Mulciberian Cyclops-beaming raſcal—thou recreant ſervitor to recreant Hinds;—thou haſt no more honourable aſpirement in thee, than is in a tail-abbreviated Butcher's retainer.——Becauſe the apoſtate Prince, the Eaſtcheap Iſcariot, commended the boy Francis, thou muſt, forſooth, perpetually gibbet, gibbet, gibbet, up and down like mine Hoſteſs's pybald turnſpit.

One would think, the only particle of Promethean animation, thy carcaſe was

* Perhaps the Reader ſhould be reminded, that Bardolph had left Sir John's ſervice on account of the Knight's increaſed expences, and engaged himſelf as Tapſter to mine Hoſt of the Garter.

"I ſit at Ten pound a week."

FALSTAFF.

Merry Wives of Windſor.

Act I. Scene 3.

dowered

dowered with, had concenter'd in thy perpetually verduring naſalities ;—and yet have I ſeen thee trail a pike moſt puiſſantly.—Nay, 'twas thy gait, thy warlike deportment, procured thee a Halbert ; ſuperadded indeed to a ſubtilty of finger thou wert egregiouſly endowed with.

Haſt thou forgotten, when ſome thirty years ago thou wert piouſly bawling out a roſary with good Miſtreſs Blurt, at Paul's ? Haſt thou forgotten the theft of her holy beads ? I ſaw it, and dubb'd thee an Officer upon the ſpot ; and now are theſe good Gentlemanly acquirements ſhrunk to the ſervice of a pewter-pot ! ——By the Spirit of Cacus, 'tis an apoſtacy more egregious than that of the betrayer Judas.—To ſee a fine, dull, indifferent, diſpaſſionate, Pick-purſe, forego his laudable, his honourable avocation, and commence waiting-varlet, 'mong the draff of ſociety ! 'Tis a breach, a perilous gap in the holy Command, which preſcribes unto Man to be duteous and content in his ordained ſtate of life.—I ſhall live to ſee thee

thee damn'd, Bardolph.—In the name of a ſoldier, I conjure thee beſtir thyſelf—Inſtant diſcharge me the Knave *Tapſter*, and inliſt me the tall Recruit *Ambition*.—Think not I would that thou ſhould'ſt forſwear ale—— Drink, drink—an' it's an angel a quart, I'll anſwer the brewage.

If thou conceit'ſt, that the deep Waſſel is only to be kept in common houſes, thou art villainouſly miſtaken.—I was never a Tapſter, and yet hath my blood kept a perpetual Coronation.—Sack, burnt ſack, hath preſerv'd me an illuminated front; but indeed 'twas ever an emblem of the Falſtaff loyalty. My Grandſire, when he died, bequeath'd to his ſon's portion a ſwoln kidney. The young heir, a Roman of the true ſtamp, increas'd the family eſtate—it throve with him.—For myſelf, thou haſt known me, Bardolph, thou haſt known me. —— I am not like a many of theſe now-a-day ſummer heirs, who prodigally laviſh in civets the eſtates of their anceſtors—No—I have religiouſly kept up the inheritance. ——Prove

——Prove that the fires of my liver have ever been extinct—Prove that they have, and ſcourge me with rods like the drowſy veſtal.

In the moſt profound ſcience of philoſophy there is a term, Corporal, and it is much uſed, called an *Axiom*.——But I will not miſpend the ſupererrogatory wind, with which the omnipotence of Candy hath kindly bleſs'd me withal, by entering into verboſe definition, and perplexing thee with crude phraſe——No—I am too well acquainted with thy indiſcriminate uncleanly appliances of papers.——I will briefly obſerve then, that it hath been ever eſteemed a ſelf-evident principle, that the ſincerity of returning allegiance is better expreſſed by deeds than words.——I know not whether the Apoſtle Thomas had my belly; but this I know, I have his *unbelief*. Thou may'ſt have the faith and ſufferance of Zopyrus—more, more—I deny it not——But, Corporal, I'll ſee thee damn'd ere I'll truſt to it, till thou haſt given the irrefragable proof—

My

My horſes are under arreſt—Mine Hoſt hath them in durance for a credit of Ford's —he that made a Yonker of the fat Knight, under the ſemblance of Maſter Brook—that dealt him angels in his pocket, and blows on his ſkin—that ſlighted him into a ditch for a tadpole, and hunted him through Windſor Foreſt for a buck—that———but the breath of man is not ſufficiently competent to great revenge. ——I did never wiſh to controul the ſouth-weſt wind till now—I'd bliſter him, till the very beaſts trembled at his din.——Bardolph, bring off my beaſts, my horſes—Steal—Enter Ford's houſe—there is a ſouth door but ill-fortified; and let me ſee thee forty pound the weightier for thy tapſterſhip. I ſhall be in Eaſtcheap—Delay not the moments—Mine Antient Piſtol doth await to greet thee by the fiſt.——I'll not bid thee *adieu*, but I'll bid thee *farewell.*—Nym faith, there is a ſtoop of excellent malt-liquor in tap here.

JOHN FALSTAFF.

SIR

SIR HUGH EVANS OF THE GOOT TOWN WINDSOR, PRIEST, TO SIR JOHN FALSTAFF, GREETING.

SIR John, I emprace you fery affectionately—I fold you to my posom—marry, not itentically and literally, o'my conscience you are too *pig*; put py type and py token, as Mistress Ford is 'ont express her affection, peradventure, in 'Indsor Forest. Ha! ha! ha!—Sir John, why you are creat upon your own elections and immunities—Free Ranger in King Harry's Park, and Knight of the most respectable and goot Order of the Path; invested, marry, in Datchet Mead.—Pless my soul! why I did never know Christian rise to such preferments without the assistance of Majesty—save and except hur own countrymen, who have, inteed, been compell'd to crow creat of themselves since the days of Llewellyn*. Why, if the opinion

* The last King of Wales.

of

of ſome ſhrewd Philoſophers pe juſt and goot, which do aſer, that the ſoul of man (and the pody is conjunctive* and inſeparate) doth procreſſively crow nearer to perfection, o'my conſcience, you make ſuch ſtrides, you will pe exalted apove the heads of all the people fery ſhortly; if py no other means, marry, at the callows for ſtifling ſome poor 'oman to death with that monſtrous feather-ped in your pelly. Ha! ha! ha! You ſee, Sir John, we of the Rubrick can pe fery merry, maugre a plack coat and doublet; put you muſt pear with a little—(Pleſs my ſoul, what is the 'ord? Galen hath it—) aye, 'tis a *Retort*—you muſt pear with a little retort, for the mockery and gybe you did put upon me 'fore Maſter Ford, and his goot friends.

Put all this is not my preſent puſineſs.—There is a man, Sir John, marry, one Pandolph, or *Pardolph*, for inteed he hath not,

* Sir Hugh, Sir Hugh, thou art ſchiſmatick, Sir Hugh.

Got

Got help, the appearance of a Pope's Legate—a ſleepy, heavy-look'd man, with lifid knots on his noſe and cheeks—you muſt recollection the man—he lives with mine Hoſt of the Garter, and traws ale and peer in a greaſy old red coat.——Well, peing very illiterate and padly prought up, the more the pity! he hath fery properly, look'e, made motions to me, as his Paſtor, to frame ſomething goot by way of anſwer to a tender made him.——Got pleſs my heart and ſoul, why you are 'orſe than the Arch-Tevil in Paradiſe!—You tempt man and 'oman both.——Look'e, Sir John, the intention may pe goot; put I muſt pe pold to declare, the man peareth himſelf with greater order and principle, o'my conſcience, than there is reaſon to pelieve, and credit of him, aforetime—Inteed, he is a little pit given to trowſineſs; put then he doth not pilfer, and do dirty actions, as Abraham Slender, Eſquire, Got's Lords! a creat Magiſtrate o' the County o' Glouceſter, can vouch.——I do afer, Sir John, the man is petter pe a door-keeper in the Houſe of the Lord,

Lord, than a creat one in the tents o' the ungodly—ſo, take your 'viſaments in this. ——He 'ould altogether remain with mine Hoſt, who doth pleed him, and phyſick him, and inteed 'ork with as much diſcretions on his face to render ſomewhat like the image of a man; though more the misfortune, without effect.——Peradventure, he may have ſome private hankerings after a prother ſoldier—'tis to pe expected—Got's Lords! Thirty years is a long ſhot to follow the Trum;—put I do peſeech, and deſire of you, that he pe not enticed nor ſpirited away; for, o' my conſcience, the man hath put little prain to help himſelf.—— Peſeech you, Sir John, looke', as a ſhrewd turn.

I ſhall pe glad to pe advis'd of your emparkation to pull down the French King.—Got ſend his Majeſty 'ould make his peace with Glendower—He's a prave man, and 'ould atchiefe 'onders—O' my life, you'll do nought without him.——Ah you have admittances to his Majeſty, make a prief o' the

o'the matter, and report it—he may pe ſoon found—depend, he's only among the plack mountains.

Marry, Sir John, there is one matter peſide.——You did porrow at my houſe a ſilver toaſter.—Mine Hoſt of the Garter hath it not.—Peſeech you, look among your ſervice of plate, and let me have it—'tis a weight o' fourteen ounce—Mine Hoſt did merrily ſay your plate was all carried off on your pack. Ha! ha! ha! Pe you a pedlar, Sir John, or was it a vlout, and a freak of the ſcald knave's? O' my conſcience, one 'ould think you had enough to do to pear away your own powels; more eſpecially after the merry compination o' the Inn-keepers. Peſeech you, Sir John, look among your ſervice for my toaſter.—I have a preſent of Seeſe from Monmouth.

Well! Got's comfort go with you!—his Angels piddle down pleſſings on your knaggin!

HUGH EVANS.

SIR JOHN TO CORPORAL BARDOLPH.

BARDOLPH, thou wilt make me call on Heaven to take me to itſelf—I ſhall regret having ſurvived to witneſs the degeneracy of Gentlemen, my good friends.——I know not whether Dame Fortune will have it ſo for ſome diſſervice I have done her, but my late paſſages in life have been villainouſly wayward——Piſtol hath play'd me the light heel—Nym hath revolted—thou art a truant.——Mine Antient, and Nym, indeed, unable to procure forage without me, have come to confeſſion and received abſolution; and thou doſt only withſtand the affectionate tenders and remonſtrances of thy old Maſter.——Bardolph, have I wrong'd thee at any time? Have I not made mine own neceſſities crouch to thy wants? Nay, have I not, many a time and oft, advanced thee monies when mine whole company were fain, out of very poverty, quarter upon the country? Thrice have I reſcued thy legs from

from the Stocks.—When have I withheld my linen, when thy body had elſe rotted in bed? But that I ſaved thee, thou had once been flogg'd from Hamlet to Hamlet, been ſkinn'd for a fox, for pullet-ſtealing.—— What matters it, that thou wert employed by me? Thy duty and fidelity to thy Maſter would gain thee laud at the latter day, I grant ye; but would it have pour'd in oil to thy wounds here?

I had thought of retiring from the world, like a good white-headed old man, ſurrounded by every my antient and approved good domeſtics.——I had thought of devoting a portion of my future days of ſtrength to the ſubduing of my juvenile paſſions—I was loth to put it off too long; for know, Bardolph, there is a certain point in the age of Man, when the Delights of the Fleſh do wax palſied in their government.—I mean not, that the accumulation of a ſpecifick number of years muſt of neceſſity blunt the powers—No.—God forbid, that threeſcore ſhould be unprocreative!—Indeed, I am

more than that myſelf—No.——There is a period, I ſay, which is more diſtant or early, according to the ſtrength of the fortreſs, when our ally, Dame Nature, cauſeth the foe to withdraw, and ſaveth us the merit of a ſelf-conqueſt.

Haſt thou never obſerv'd, good Corporal, (now can I not call thee by any other name) haſt thou never obſerv'd in Eaſtcheap a ſpare acrimonious-looking Cannibal, feeding on his brethren, I would mean on roaſt crabs? Haſt thou never obſerv'd the dewlap'd Elder, wtth finger trembling on the chords of old-age, apply beſtriding glaſſes to his well-contrived noſe, and view the figures on mine Hoſteſs's tapeſtry? His ocular powers have grown dim by age—in vain doth he look out for the ſoft colourings that once pleas'd him—his eye can diſcern nought but the ordinary ſhades—his film, his film does it.——Juſt ſo fares it with this goodly landſcape of the world—The Yonker admires it's ſofter colourings, it's pleaſures; and by habit is too prone to retain

retain a ſmack for them, till the laſt hour of actual enjoyment paſſeth away; till the blood, it's uncheck'd ſpirit flagg'd in reaching the imaginary goal, courſeth along like a ſtaid mule. This ſtate of incompetent imbecility would I provide againſt—I would have the merit of a foreſtall'd repentance.

There *is* a thing, Corporal, mentioned *in* Holy Writ, and *it is* known to many in our land by the name of muſhroom—*Manna*, I would ſay; but indeed, 'tis the ſame thing.—This Manna, as Moſes doth aſſert in his Reports upon adjudged Caſes, fell as the dew of Heaven upon an hungry people. Now, if they had poſſeſſed no teeth, good Corporal, God's Elect had been loſt, and the Manna remained unmaſticate at this day.

Such another windfall is Penitence, unprofitable to him who findeth it too late.

For this cauſe had I thought of retiring timely with my good domeſtics

and retainers about me.—Thyſelf, Nym, Piſtol, my faithful dogs, Miſtreſs Dol, with thy own Helen, good Corporal, all, all ſhould embrace the bleſſed moment of Regeneration.—For this did I deſire thee to bring off my horſes.—Is it for me, Corporal, to abandon my gentle, my good cattle, to the mercy of the ungodly, to the thong of a mundanely-minded hunt-counter, an Inn-keeper? I thank my God, I have not yet the bowels of a Turk.

Mine Antient, who bears theſe, wil inform thee more fully.—Adviſe with him, and remember, Bardolph, if thou ſtill adhereſt to thy damnable hereſy, Sir John is no longer thy friend.

Farewell!

ANTIENT PISTOL TO SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

LET ſack abound!——Be merry, Goodman Buff—for Bardolph, foul-engender'd Wight, the Mule of ſtubborn rein, doth yield to Knighthood's proffers.——Sir John ſhall have the ſtud—avaunt the ſtud of muſhroom growth, the Bardolph's naſal ſtud! I mean the Bully Rock's—Bucephalus, and Alexandrine nags! Sir John ſhall ſteed again—Piſtol hath ſaid it.——Shall deeds proclaim, how Garter'd Hoſts, and Brazen Bulls were charm'd? Or will old Œſon liſt, ere Jaſon doth bring home the Golden Fleece? I will unfold, for ſince that Quorum-oneyers* yearn to ſack, Pauca's a tatler grown.

* Antient Piſtol muſt allude to the mirth of Maſter Silence in his cups.——Vide Henry IVth. Second Part.

When Piſtol kenn'd the Lazar, he of ſpigot-puiſſance, off-ſhogg'd the ſcouler like to Dutchman's pinnace.——And did not anceſtry o'ertake? Yea, and ſubdue; or Piſtol's Caliber is not of England's mould.

Sir John, and maſter mine, thou art the kernel and the core of Clerkiſh Knighthood.——The Apple of mine Eye is baſe—Foh! a Figo for the phraſe!——Let paucity be Nym's—Piſtol is queint of quip.—Thou art the Tree on Ida's top, whence golden apples grow to tempt the maw of man.——Bardolph will pluck, go to.——Thy ſchooliſh letter, Knight, hath from the lees of ale incorporate diſtill'd unmanly tear; at ſcan of it, the baſhful Corporal did weep like ſhe of Thebes.—His ſenſes are moſt ſap—he hath been brew'd, and wort's his age—Doth the humour paſs?——He is a child, go to—and from his ſwaddling-clothes will Piſtol ſhape the doublet, ſlops, and eke the ſhort cloak hight, for Knighthood's wear.——Shall Dombledons and ſilk-worms vile lay dead in Sepulchre, and

ſhall

ſhall not man be cloath'd? Why then let Ford be ſpun.—He ſhall be robb'd; for warriors muſt have Mark in body and in breech.——Clip we the Bardolph's ſnuff, when ſervices are done? Or do we fuel add, for he is to the ſocket burnt?—In filching time his eyelids do bow down, and pawn'd he hath to weaver's man moſt baſe, his goodly Caliver, for hoſe of ſecond wear. —He muſt be ſherk'd, or charges will enſue. —Come we to the *pauca one*, or ſhall the Phœnix blaze? We muſt adopt, or Dian will become maid Marian to Lucifer, and lead his mowing Imps, his damned Apes of Hell.—We muſt ſucceſſion have; for lads and compeers, wooers of the Moon, ſhould never dwindle fellowſhip—Piſtol will Jack-all be unto the crew.——Sir John, and Lion mine, arreſt thine eyes' epiſtolary progreſs, and mark the Calf—I mean the crural Calf. —Seeſt thou ought unſymmetried? Now, by the Lad that Vulcan, he of antler'd brow, did catch like Sparrow, his ſoul is as well apportion'd.—Palm him the Nief of mickle Fellowſhip, and from the tiding-

bearer low bid boyhood riſe the puiſſant Pick-purſe.—Ought, that Piſtol hath not utter'd, he will unfold.—Bow down umbrageous Manhood, and perpend unto him.

Thine ANTIENT PISTOL.

Ford ſhall be robb'd—Bardolph is Tapſter to him, and doth his threſhold know.—Thy Nags ſhall forage in Eaſtcheap ere bats do ſleep again.——Farewell!

DAVY TO SHALLOW.

I BESEECH your good Worſhip to come quick. Here is Maſter Abram very ill—He goes about, and about, and lobs his head over this ſhoulder, and over that ſhoulder, like, your Worſhip, as it were, juſt of all the world like the large ſun-flower of an afternoon by the tulip borders.——I'm afraid, and ſo's Robin, that he's beſtraught; for he ſighs, and ſlobbers his beard, and

Robin

Robin ſays, a' ſometimes looks, marry, juſt as your Worſhip did, when your Worſhip went mad about the Coat of Arms at old Sir Thomas's death.——He went on the Bench with your Worſhip's Couſin Silence*, to commit ſome vagrants, for ſtealing the nettles out of the ditch in the Park to make broth, thereby hurting the fences; and he took no note of any thing, but look'd down upon the ground, and ſigh'd, and ſigh'd—and preſently, when your Worſhip's Couſin Silence ordered I ſhould make out a mittimus for one Alice Page, a' cried out, *Mum!* and ſaid, ſhe was in white—and ſhe was an old gypſey, your Worſhip, in drab; and ſo I told Maſter Abram, but he call'd me a *Poſt-boy*.——I beſeech your Worſhip to come quick, for a' heeds nobody.——Maſter Abram was wont ſpeak very ſoft, and play ball with the maids, and ſing to us in the Hall; and now a' goes about, and pines, and pines, and eats no not the tithe

* Query.——Was not this ſame Maſter Silence a deſcendant of the Roman *Tacitus?*

of a goofeberry.— I got him a diſh of prunes, ſtew'd prunes, your Worſhip, that a' was wont to delight in; and a' touch'd them not; but ſaid, *Mr. Fentum, Mr. Fentum* muſt have 'em.—But I told him there was no ſuch a Gentleman in Cotſwold; then a' call'd out, "*Nan Page was a maid*;" and ſo fell a gobbling them up with his hands, both his hands, that, your Worſhip, 'twas quite unlike Maſter Abram, that was always ſo baſhful to eat afore any body at all.——I beg your Worſhip to haſten, or a' may come to a bad end.—A' went out at twelve o'clock laſt night, and ſaid the fat Knight Falſtaff, he that robb'd your Worſhip's Park, was under the Elms —Robin and I took our Calivers to ſhoot him, remembering your Worſhip's directions; but a' was not there—all was lonely, your Worſhip, and yet Maſter Abram would not come in.—A' ſaid, "Nan Page would appear in white," and then a call'd out, *Mum! Mum!*

Good

Good your Worſhip, I'll be bold to obſerve upon a point:—A matter has ſtruck me, as your Worſhip was wont to ſay—marry, and very hard.——I hope he be not, that is, I think a' would not, your Worſhip conceits me, I ſhould grieve that—that our Maſter Abram were in league with———Truly, I have ſerv'd your Worſhip very faithfully a matter of twelve years, as ſerving-man, and ſteward, and butler, and———I have but ſix mark a year, your Worſhip—— and clerk, and keeper of the ſtocks, and—all for ſix mark, your Worſhip —— and cook, and cook's man, and—hatch'd your Worſhip's young turkies, worn all your Worſhip's caſt doublets and hoſe——it's a long charge for one lone man, and ſix mark's a ſhort reckoning, and I hope, your Worſhip would make a friend of me in any great matter——An Maſter Abram be one on 'em, he may have great reaſon for it—and I'll be ſuppos'd he is; for a' walks back and back quite in thought, and ſpeaks to himſelf, and then anſwers, and does all juſt as Percy the Duke's ſon did, afore he

was

was kill'd——Your Worſhip may truſt a worſe man than me, and truſt a friend—Maſter Abram* may ſtand in Percy's ſhoes, and yet wear them out, I can tell your Worſhip that. —— There's much wool in Cotſwould, altho' little cry.——The Stroud's a ſmall ſhot over; but a bullet won't find the bottom ſoon.——Would your Worſhip have the bucklers and mails clean'd up, that hang in the Hall? Marry, and the Welch hooks new pointed? Glendowèr will teach us trail the hook.——I would, your Worſhip would come among us.——Here's William Viſor, and Ralph Rampant, and Phil. Snugges, and Mark Maple-eye, and a many more of us—we exerciſe, your Worſhip, every day; and I

* Who could ſuſpect ABRAHAM SLENDER, ESQ. of taking part in National Commotions? Davy's conceit is certainly a little mirthful.—Yet it ſhould be remarked, that the wild and irregular ſtarts of Percy may have been the ſubject of much talk with the common people, and by ſuch ſhrewd fellows as Davy be conſidered the diſtinguiſhing mark, or (as Falſtaff ſays) the *Shibboleth* of a Rebel of Rank.

deal out proviſions and ale from your Worſhip's cellar—and I would, your Worſhip would give order for pay; and ſome hops, your Worſhip, for brewing; and ſome hurdles for the turnip-field; and a new yoke for the oxen; and a word of comfort for Alice Shortcake;—ſhe pines, your Worſhip, about Maſter Abram.

With theſe matters I humbly take leave of your Worſhip.

SHALLOW TO DAVY.

God bleſs my heart and ſoul!—Diſband the ſoldiers, Davy.——Let 'em be diſbanded.——Bleſs my heart, I ſhall be attainted of affection to his Majeſty's enemies.——That Mark Maple-eye hath more colours than one—I have ſeen him a good ſubject.—Marry, doth my Couſin Silence know, is he adviſed of the matter?—Let him not know it, Davy.——How long hath

hath Ralph Rampant been a rebel? Marry, he ſhall remain Rampant—he ſhall be quarter'd for their arms, hung, drawn, and quarter'd.——Let my Couſin Slender be tended, Davy, cloſely, Davy—a crook in love ſhould be in the hand of a good ſhepherd—He hath been croſs'd, Davy.——A fair ſprag maiden of good conditions and endowments, but come of the firſt woman, yea more fig-leaves to conceal her tendences than Eve, Davy—marry, a *Budget**. Let John Coomb widen the ſtocks—Hath he ſent his bill, Davy? Let my Couſin Silence have it for the Quorum.——The County muſt pay it—'tis a repair awarded for damages, damages by the rebels—in their retreat, Davy.——A new granary, and a dove-cot, indeed, on my own lands, but that is nought, not awhit.—Marry, we examine—we caſt, and pay.——Truly, an

* Whether Shallow is intentionally witty, I cannot pretend to affirm; but this ſame word was to have been ſweet Ann Page's private anſwer to Maſter Slender's Quail-call in Windſor Foreſt.——Vide Merry Wives of Windſor, Act V. Scene 1.

a Juſtice

a Juſtice of the Peace could not ſhift to edge any little tiny matter in of his own, the Quorum would not hold plural—'twould quick be in the ſingular number, Davy, ſoon *Qui, quæ, quod.*—Ha! ha! ha!—We don't labour in the vineyard for nought, Davy—Ha! ha! ha! Marry, let the Stocks be widened—Bid John Coomb look to it, and ſee that it be done.——I'm reſolv'd, that William Viſor ſhall not 'ſcape—his legs ſhall not bear him off again—he hath a groſs calf; but the Stocks ſhall bind it—he ſhall not get away—yea, he ſhall be bound in calf.——God bleſs my ſoul, Davy, how could you aſſemble; how encourage, marry, and marſhal, the foes of his gracious Majeſty?—O' my conſcience, I might have been proclaim'd, yea, marry, declared a rebel by attainder, and march'd againſt.——But indeed you have not been in love, Davy—You never lov'd.—My Couſin Slender hath a great trial—look to him, Davy—he hath much——Give him attendance, Davy—he may ſtart, marry, and break out, and—'tis love, Davy, look to him,

a liege

a liege ſubject, and a loyal, may do it.—— I could name you the day, when the hear of a fine tall Bona-Roba would make me, I ſhould ha' hop'd you——— God bleſs my heart, why what, Davy—it is not all brew'd —hath become of the Pocket from Hinchley market—the Pocket of Hops, new hops, Davy, bought at the Wake, marry, of Hugh Ryecrop?——You can't chuſe want hops, Davy—certain you can't.———Marry for the yoke, let it be had; but the hurdles, Davy, muſt be ſtak'd and bound—You don't give range, you don't give ſcope, Davy, to the flock.—Let them have an half acre turnip—they'll not level fences.—— Look to my Couſin Slender.—I ſhall tend him myſelf, Davy, ſoon, Davy.

ROBERT SHALLOW.

* Here is an air of pleaſantry throughout, that I have never obſerved in Shallow before. Through all his affected anger, 'tis eaſy enough to diſcover, that his vanity is not a little fed by Davy's anticipating officiouſneſs.—No matter to Robert in what cauſe they had aſſembled, he had a corps of ſoldiers training in his ſervice!

DAVY

DAVY TO SHALLOW.

MASTER Abram is dead, gone, your Worſhip—dead! Maſter Abram! Oh! good your Worſhip, a's gone.——A never throve, ſince a' came from Windſor—'twas his death. I call'd him a rebel, your Worſhip—but a' was all ſubject—a' was ſubject to any babe, as much as a King—a' turn'd, like as it were the latter end of a lover's lute—a' was all peace and reſignment—a' took delight in nothing but his book of ſongs and ſonnets—a' would go to the Stroud ſide under the large beech tree, and ſing, till 'twas quite pity of our lives to mark him; for his chin grew as long as a muſcle —Oh! a' ſung his ſoul and body quite away —a' was lank as any greyhound, and had ſuch a ſcent! I hid his love-ſongs among your Worſhip's law-books; for I thought, if a' could not get at them, it might be to his quiet; but a ſnuff'd 'em out in a moment.——Good your Worſhip, have the wife

wife woman of Brentford fecured—Maſter Abram may have been conjured—Peter Simple ſays, a' never look'd up, after a ſent to the wife woman—Marry, a' was always given to look down afore his elders; a' might do it, a' was given to it—your Worſhip knows it; but then 'twas peak and pert with him—a' was a man again, marry, in the turn of his heel.——A' died, your Worſhip, juſt about one, at the crow of the cock.—I thought how it was with him; for a talk'd as quick, aye, marry, as glib as your Worſhip; and a' ſmiled, and look'd at his own noſe, and call'd "Sweet Ann Page." I aſk'd him if a' would eat—ſo a' bad us commend him to his Couſin Robert (a' never call'd your Worſhip ſo before) and bade us get hot meat, for a' would not ſay nay to Ann again*.—But a' never liv'd to touch it—a' began all in a moment to ſing "Lovers all, a Madrigal." 'Twas the only ſong Maſter Abram ever learnt out of

* Vide Merry Wives of Windſor—Latter part of the 1ſt Scene, 1ſt Act.

book

book, and clean by heart, your Worſhip—and ſo a' ſung, and ſmiled, and look'd aſkew at his own noſe, and ſung, and ſung on, till his breath waxed ſhorter, and ſhorter, and ſhorter, and a' fell into a ſtruggle and died. I beſeech your Worſhip to think he was well tended—I look'd to him, your Worſhip, late and ſoon, and crept at his heel all day long, an it had been any fallow dog—but I thought a' could never live, for a' did ſo ſing, and then a' never drank with it—I knew 'twas a bad ſign—yea, a' ſung, your Worſhip, marry, without drinking a drop.

Alice Shortcake craves, ſhe may make his ſhroud.—Ah! had your Worſhip but never ha' taken him to Windſor! I knew Miſtreſs Alice's mind, marry, and Maſter Abram's too—they'd ha' coupled, your Worſhip, and never dreamt of love, any more than all their forefathers, and grandfathers did afore them.

Old Sir Simon's vault muſt be opened, I humbly conceit, your Worſhip; and Maſter

Maſter Abram's effigy placed by his ſide in the Chancelry, in armour, marry, with his hands folded on his breast, by way of denoting his death's-wound! for I humbly think, with your Worſhip's leave, it may tend to warn all ſuch, as have not ſhrewd heads, from entering into love-matters.——An your Worſhip will ſpecify time and place, I'll bring the horſes to meet, and carry your Worſhip home, in order to have directions about Maſter Abram's funeral.

Your Worſhip's ſerving man,

DAVY.

The following fragment appears among Sir John's papers.——It evidently formed part of a Letter to the Prince; but being very mutilated, the Editor was for ſome time irreſolute as to granting it admiſſion among his more perfect MS.——However, an innate reverence to every the moſt trifling relique of the good Knight, at length determined him to preſent it to the publick.

* * * * made up of the ſhreds and clippings of the ſeveral arts and ſciences.——He hath made much progreſs in Italian, doth begin to wax villainouſly naſal in his pronunciation of French; and for dancing, Hal! he would flit ye to and fro like a ſhadow. * * * * *

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* * In height he is about 5 foot 11, or by'r lady, inclining to ſix foot; but the face, the face, is the Trumpeter to this aſpiring inclination of Maſter Slender's; the

the diſtance from chin to brow being a common pace, or geometrically ſpeaking, is to the whole upright ſyſtem as 4 to 16½ —one-fourth, if we omit fractions. With all this majeſty of * * * *

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Cæt. Deſunt.

CAPTAIN FLUELLIN TO MRS. QUICKLY.

GOT pleſs my heart! Captain Falſtaff dead! Miſtreſs 'Ickly, I hope he departed with the fear of his Majeſty in poth his eyes, marry, and of Got too? His Majeſty, to pe ſure, was repukings and gallings to him, when his Majeſty, look'e, was King upon the death of his father; but that is nought——If he uſed his goot pleaſures in the matter, look'e, Miſtreſs 'Ickly, he might degrade, and create a trummer, or a fifer, or what is 'orſe, the ſutler's paggage-pearer o' the camp, of me, or of any captain. Sir John was old, moſt certain, and his

his preed might pe a matter pigger than I can recollection to have ſeen; put that, look'e, ſhould not kill him a whit the more ſudden.——'hy, I did have letters from him —when was the meſſenger arrive? Aye, yeſterday is the week, 'tis in my pocket, adviſing of a kind of intention, marry, to empark for the enemy's coaſt with me and Captain Gower—'tis as gypiſh and jokiſh, and as primful of the altogether Knight, o' my conſcience, as one graff'd pippin might ſavour of another.——Put Death is fery ill and moody in his 'haviour and manners.——He is not the Gentleman, peradventure, in his intercourſes, that I might obſerve of other his relatifes.—— There was Ulyſſes the Greek had occaſions and matters to diſcuſs with Pluto—'hy, he was received, look'e, pelow, as his rank merited—O, Death had a goot pattern in Pluto!—I have had readings apout Death— You ſhall hear——

And when he 'ould pe merry, he doth chuſe
The gaudy champer of a dying King——

O! then he doth ope wide his poney chaws,
And with rude laughter and fantaſtic tricks
He claps his rattling fingers to his ſide;
And when this ſolemn mockery——

Put I will end with this ſolemn mockery. —You ſee, Miſtreſs 'Ickly, that Death hath his vlouts, and his freaks, and his merriments, maugre what all the antient writers may afer; tho', o' my conſcience, I cannot ſay, I did ever in any my pattles and ſkirmiſhes ſee him, look'e, ſo much as on a proad grin.——I am forget the lineage and family of the author; put it pe *Iriſh*.

Hath Captain Falſtaff left any creat matters in the way of eſtate? Put that's no matter at all—ſend me the pill of his funeral charges, and I will pe three crowns in his debt to puy him a pound of lead to lay in.——So Got me 'udge, I affection'd the man, as a man, peradventure, might eſtimate of a prother, where there was only one in the family, look'e, peſide the father and his ownſelf.——He was the fery perſon

ſon of all the 'orld to keep th' univerſal army in goot glee, when the athverſary, o' my conſcience, approach'd with his pike as far off as the jerk of half a ſtone.——Hath he left ſons and daughters to repreſent and typify him in the 'orld? Let me pe adviſed o' this matter, Miſtreſs 'Ickly.——I will promotion and make them as pig men under King Harry, as he that peget them of 'oman; that is, Miſtreſs 'Ickly, upon the well ſouchment, and pelief, and credit too, that they pe honeſt and goot ſubjects, and pe not given to porrowings and ſackings.—— O' my credit, there is three pounds Sir John did get advance of me py way of poſſets, which is no petter than droſs—Put that, look'e, is a matter of affapility petween us, that I 'ould not diſcuſs to an own prother. ——He is dead, and I am three crowns in his debt, and there's the finiſh.

Got bleſs you, Miſtreſs Quickly!

FINIS.

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